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Engraved by A. W. Butcher II.

Affectionately  
T. Spicer.

1850

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# AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

## REV. TOBIAS SPICER:

CONTAINING

### INCIDENTS AND OBSERVATIONS;

ALSO

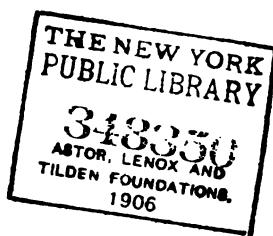
### SOME ACCOUNT

OF HIS

### VISIT TO ENGLAND.

New-York:  
PUBLISHED BY LANE & SCOTT,  
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1852.

A. S. O.



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## P R E F A C E.

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As an apology for appearing before the public in this manner, it may not be improper to state the fact, that the work here presented was written in compliance with a resolution of the Troy Annual Conference, with which body of ministers the writer is connected. This conference, at its session held in Albany, in 1847, requested the writer "to prepare an Autobiography for publication, with special reference to his experience, opinions, and observations in relation to Methodism."

The writer's labors, as will be seen, have been mostly within the bounds of the Troy Conference. Having traveled more or less in almost all the region embraced in this conference, he has been enabled to collect many facts connected with the introduction and progress of Methodism in those parts. Many of the incidents here related have occurred in connection with his own history, and it is hoped that some of them at least may be found interesting and profitable.

In the opinions and observations here introduced, the writer has not the vanity to think that he has brought out anything new. In giving his views of some matters, he may appear to many of his readers rather too partial to his own particular denomination. To such he would frankly confess, that he is somewhat partial to the system of Methodism, for he really believes that its doctrines and discipline are in accordance with God's word, and are well calculated to do good. Their effects in doing good are already too evident to be denied.

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But although the writer may be somewhat partial, he is not so bigoted that he cannot see any excellence elsewhere, or that he cannot extend his love and Christian fellowship to other churches. In common with all his Methodist brethren, he believes in free communion with Evangelical Christians of all denominations.

The writer would here beg pardon of his readers for appearing somewhat *egotistic* in the following pages. This appearance he scarcely knows how to avoid. If a man attempts to write anything concerning himself, it is very difficult to appear otherwise. If he were to use the *third person* instead of the *first*, it would make but little difference; — there *he* is, and there *he* must be, the hero of his own story. If he were to use the *plural* pronoun *we*, instead of the singular *I*, he would thereby only change the *ism* from *e-gotism* to *we-gotism*, which would make the matter worse; for he would then present himself to his readers as being somewhat more than an ordinary man; — he would rank himself with popes, kings, and editors, which, perhaps, a modest man might not choose to do.

Although autobiography may seem to imply egotism, it is hoped the reader will find, in the following pages, more account of what others have done than of what the writer himself has done, and that he is more disposed to praise others than himself. Egotism does not consist in the frequent repetition of the pronoun *I*, so much as it does in the representation of ourselves as of the greatest importance of any of whom we speak. This is equally egotistic and offensive, whether it is expressed by using the third person, *he*, or the plural, *we*.

If anything has been well done by the writer, or any one else, and if any good results have followed, all praise belongeth to the Lord.

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## A U T O B I O G R A P H Y.

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### MY CHILDHOOD.

*Early religious impressions. — Inclined to scepticism. — A suggestion to parents and youth.*

THE first thing which I remember concerning myself, is, that when I was about four years old my parents lived in the town of Kinderhook, Columbia county, New York. My parents have since told me that I was born in that place, November 7, 1788. My father's name was Nathan; he had thirteen children, of whom I was the youngest.

During my childhood, I presume, but few things occurred in my history worth being recorded. I doubt not that, like all other children, I gave good evidence that I was a fallen creature. When I was about six years old my father removed to the town of Nassau, about twelve miles east of Albany. Neither my parents nor any of the family, at that time, made any profession of religion. I can very distinctly remember the first religious impression ever made on my mind; I believe it was made by the direct agency of the Holy Spirit. I was about six years of age when this event took place. I was engaged in some childish amusement by the roadside, a few rods from my father's house, when an inquiry

*V. Seel Rev. of Falls Point. . . .  
• was also born here. . . .*

was suddenly awakened in my mind respecting what would become of me should I die, as did a little child in the neighborhood a short time previous, at whose burial I was present. This thought so troubled me that I lost all relish for my play, and I hastened into the house to inquire of my mother about this matter. My mother, not fully apprehending the meaning of my inquiry, replied by saying, that when I died I should be buried, as was the little child which I had seen buried. But this answer did not satisfy me; I wanted to know what would then become of me. It was some time before I could make her understand my meaning, for I knew not what language to use respecting myself after I should die, for as yet I had never heard a word said about the soul or a future state.

At length my mother perceived my meaning; and, although she made no profession of religion, she was a reader of the Bible, and had learned the doctrine of man's immortality, which is brought to light by the gospel, and she had some general idea of the way of salvation. Her answer gave me the first distinct notion that I had a soul that would never die, and that I was accountable to God for all my actions. She first taught me, that, in order to go to heaven when I die, I must become good. From that time ever after I feared God, and often had strong desires to become good. Whenever I did anything which I thought was wrong, I felt condemned and unhappy, for I thought I had displeased God.

It was nearly a year after this before I had ever attended a religious meeting. The first I ever attended was held in a barn. I cannot remember who preached, but I recollect I got some notions of God and religion which I never had before; and my desire to be good was *much increased*. And, although it may seem remark-

able, and to some, perhaps, incredible, there was then an impression made on my mind, that when I should become a man I should be a preacher. And this impression always remained until I entered the ministry, which was in the twenty-second year of my age.

I was early taught to read, and had, while quite young, considerable relish for reading. I was, however, somewhat unfortunate in the choice of books, for I had no friend who cared for my soul, or who could show me what books were most suitable. Such books as happened to fall in my way were anything but religious. They were generally such as I could borrow. Many of them were very unprofitable, and even injurious, for many of them were decidedly infidel in their character, and had a tendency to make me sceptical. This was a circumstance in my history which I greatly regret, for it has been the cause of much trouble to my mind, all through the earlier part of my life. Scepticism has been my plague, and would be still, had not my experience taught me some very important facts which I cannot doubt — facts which have confirmed me in the truth.

In view of the foregoing passage in my history, I would take occasion to admonish parents to be careful to furnish their children when young with suitable food for their minds, and not suffer them to feed on poison, as I did. And I would advise children and youth to be very cautious in the choice of books; and, especially, I would advise them to avoid all such as treat the Bible and religion with disrespect. Wrong impressions, made in early life, are not easily erased. They often lay the foundation for infidelity or some other soul-destroying error. When I was young there were no Sabbath schools, nor was there such a variety of books suited to instruct the youth, as there is at the present day.

## RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

1808.

Irreligious youth. — Frequent awakenings. — Determined to seek religion. — Obtained peace. — Joined the Methodists.

When I was eleven years old, my father resided in Nassau, about twelve miles east of Albany, and about this time the Methodist preachers began to visit this place. They preached on week days in the school-house where I attended school. The school would continue until near the time for preaching to commence; then it was dismissed. I generally remained to attend the meeting. Although young, the preaching made a powerful impression on my mind. I often felt deep conviction for sin, and feared the wrath to come. Religion, many times, appeared very lovely, and I often earnestly desired that I might experience it; but no one in my father's family knew how to instruct me, or to encourage me in a religious course.

As I grew up, my heart increased in wickedness and in the love of sin. I believe, however, that such were my convictions for sin, from time to time, produced by the Holy Spirit applying truth to my conscience, and such my fear of God, that, if I had enjoyed the instruction and example of pious parents, or pious friends, I should have experienced religion sooner than I did. But I had none to guide my wandering steps.

Thus matters passed on, until I was about fifteen years of age, by which time, I am sorry to be obliged to say, I had become a very wicked boy. I disregarded the Sabbath, had but very little relish for attending any place of worship, and was in the habit of using profane language. At this time, I certainly bid fair to become a *very careless and wicked man*. But it pleased God not

to give me up to the power of sin and the devil; but He continued to strive with me by his Holy Spirit. He opened my eyes to see, and my heart to feel, and at length gathered me among His people. This He did in the following manner.

Sometime in October, 1803, I wandered off one Sabbath morning into an adjoining grove, for the purpose of gathering nuts, and did not return until nearly noon. When I returned, I found that all the family had gone to church; and, when I recollect what I had been doing on the Sabbath, I felt guilty before God, and exceedingly unhappy. I felt so wretched that I scarcely knew what to do with myself; but happening to see an old book lying on the floor, I took it up, thinking I would divert my mind by reading. This book happened to be a little volume entitled, "Russell's Seven Sermons." I opened on a sermon, John v. 28, 29: "The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." It was a discourse on the "Day of Judgment." I commenced reading, and the Spirit of God powerfully applied truth to my heart. I seemed to see the Judge of all on his great white throne, and the books open before him, and all the human family standing in his presence; and I seemed to see them divided to the right and to the left of the Judge. I then had such a view of myself as I never had before; I viewed myself as standing on the left hand, waiting to hear my sentence and receive my doom. And for a moment I felt as though the dreadful sentence was really passed on all the guilty multitude, and all were about to be driven from God's presence, and I among the rest. I felt for a moment as though I was actually on my way

down toward the everlasting burnings. I stopped reading, dropped my book — a shudder ran all through me. I was terribly alarmed in my feeling, and for a little while I was in a real agony. But in a few moments I recovered myself, and cried out, "O, I am yet out of hell!" and I fell on my knees and commenced praying aloud: "O God! have mercy on me;" and there on my knees, alone, I solemnly promised the Lord I would forsake my sin, and never rest until I found his favor.

From that time the world had lost its charms to me, and I continued to seek the Lord with great earnestness. There was a wonderful change came over my mind; I endeavored to avoid sin and all wicked company, and I felt a desire to be alone and pray. In this state of mind I remained about three weeks, before I found any comfort. Indeed, it was nearly two months before I became fully satisfied that God had forgiven my sins, and that my heart was renewed by the Holy Ghost.

But before I found peace I felt it to be my duty to unite with Christian people; and, accordingly, I offered myself to the Methodists, and was admitted on probation as a seeker of religion. ~~Rev.~~ Elias Vanderlip was the preacher in charge, who received me into society, and John Craw was the leader to whose class I was assigned. Both of these blessed men have gone to their reward in heaven. Brother Craw died, I believe, in 1833, and Brother Vanderlip in September, 1848. I always looked upon these men as my best friends on earth; their memory to this day is very precious.

When I was admitted among these Christian people, I think I did not seem to promise much to the church; however, as unpromising as was my case, they received me; a circumstance which has ever been of great importance to me. My conversion and union with the Meth-

*o  
after of Mrs Phoebe T Vanderlip  
as the mother of Rev Geo. V. Vanderlip*

dists, I have ever looked upon as the most interesting event of my whole life. They laid the foundation for much comfort which I have enjoyed in religion and among religious people. I am well convinced that the Methodists and their peculiar economy were best calculated to do me good. Their prudential regulations and means of grace, such as love-feasts, class-meetings, and prayer-meetings, were well calculated to assist me in carrying out my resolutions which I had formed. And their doctrines were such as I needed to restrain and encourage me to persevere. Had I been taught the doctrine of predestination and the impossibility of falling from grace, I have great reason to believe that I should soon have made shipwreck of my faith, and have become a cast-away. The latter doctrine would have encouraged me to have let go my hold, and the former would have landed me in Universalism, if not in downright infidelity. I have reason to thank God eternally that I was placed under the influence of Methodism, and warm-hearted Christian friends, who loved me and watched over me in my youth. Religion and peculiar circumstances have effected a great change in my feelings and conduct.

## CALL TO PREACH.

Impressions of duty.—Revival in school.—Received license to exhort.—Took counsel.

I have already said, that, at the time when I first heard preaching, an impression was made on my mind that I should preach when I became a man. I will now say that this impression had remained from that time until the time of my conversion, after which it became much more powerful. However, I told no one of it until nearly five years after, and I presume that during that time no

one entertained such a thought concerning me, for perhaps there was scarce any event that seemed more unlikely.

At that time I labored under many disadvantages, which it may not be proper or necessary to mention. In the spring of 1808, I took a district school in the town of Chatham, which I continued to teach until the fall of 1809. While in this employment my mind became very much stirred up on the subject of duty, and I occasionally exhorted and prayed in public, and my brethren, of their own accord, recommended me to the preacher in charge as a suitable person to be licensed to exhort. Accordingly, I obtained license, and used to hold meetings in different neighborhoods in the vicinity.

After having continued about a year and a half in this school, I left the place and took a school in Hillsdale, a town adjoining. Here a blessed revival broke out; it commenced in the school among the children, and resulted in the formation of an excellent Methodist society in the place. This greatly encouraged me to pursue the course of life to which the impressions of my mind had long inclined me.

It now seemed my duty to preach, and I thought proper to open my mind freely to the preacher who had the charge of the circuit. Brother Arnold was an aged man and prudent. He gave me his views of a call to the ministry. He said he did not think every good man was called to preach. He thought a person should be deeply impressed in his own mind with a sense of duty; and he considered the voice of the church as the *providential voice* of God in this matter. If God had called me to this work, he would somehow open the door for me. This aged brother gave me what I most needed, — suitable instruction in this matter. He neither hurried me forward, nor thrust me back. He

advised me to exercise my gift in public by exhortation and prayer, to read my Bible very carefully, and by all possible means to improve my mind and cultivate my heart in deep and ardent piety. He said a preacher who had not a strong religious feeling, would not make out much among the Methodists.

I endeavored to profit by the instruction and advice given me by this aged minister, and continued to hold meetings in every neighborhood where I was invited, until the ensuing spring, when I obtained a recommendation to be admitted into the Travelling Connection. Until this time I had only a license to exhort. Now I had made up my mind to give myself up entirely to the work of the ministry. I now gave up my school, took leave of my friends, and set off to attend the session of the New York Conference, which was held in Pittsfield, Mass., May 20, 1810.

## BRANDON CIRCUIT.

1810, 1811.

Joined the Conference. — Appointed on Brandon Circuit. — Travelled and preached frequently. — Opposition of Rev. Mr. G. — Sketch of his sermon. — Sketch of Mr. W.'s Sermon. — Results. — Rev. Mr. H.'s remarks. — Reply. — Preached in G. — An interview with Rev. Mr. R. — Preached on falling from grace. — Rev. Mr. R.'s opposition. — Made a confession. — A morning interview with Elder R. — Elder Bromley. — Kind reproof. — Married. — Dropped by rule of Conference. — Reflections on the subject.

At the conference held in Pittsfield, in 1810, I was admitted on trial into the travelling connection, and appointed on Brandon circuit with Rev. Daniel Bromley. Brother B. was, at that time, an excellent man and a useful minister; he was a friend and father to me; but I am sorry to say that, since then, this brother has missed his way.

Brandon circuit was, at that time, very large; it

embraced no less than *thirty-one* towns, and *thirty* regular appointments. If I recollect, we had *twenty-three* societies. These appointments we each visited once in four weeks, so that they had preaching once a fortnight. In order to attend these appointments, each of us had to ride about *four hundred* miles in four weeks. This was performed on horseback; and in many places the roads were exceedingly bad, especially in the spring and fall; and, at that time, our accommodations were not always the most agreeable. To me it was a year of great toil and labor; I travelled nearly five thousand miles, and attempted to preach four hundred and nine times.

It was a year of some interest and of some revival of religion on the circuit. We found our way into several places where hitherto Methodism had been unknown, and, of course, where we were looked upon with a jealous eye, and heard with considerable prejudice. In one place, I had an invitation to preach not far from Rev. Mr. G.'s church. This gave him some offence; I was looked upon as an intruder into his parish. After I had preached there a few times, he felt it his duty to warn his people against the intruder. This he did by reading a discourse to them on Rom. xvi. 17: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrines ye have learned, and avoid them." He reminded them of the doctrines they had learned. These were the doctrines of Calvinism; these he particularly enumerated, not even omitting that which teaches that God had, from all eternity, unchangeably decreed whatsoever comes to pass. Then he went on to particularly mark the men who should be avoided.

1. They were such as preached contrary to the doctrines they had learned.

2. They were such as introduced themselves into

places where they already had the stated means of grace, their only object being to pull down other churches. After he had described the Methodist preachers as well as he knew how, he earnestly exhorted his people to avoid them; they must not contribute to their support, nor hear them preach, nor receive them into their houses.

This discourse gave us occasion for self-defence, and for calling in question the truth of some of the doctrines which his people had learned. It was the occasion of considerable discussion on doctrinal subjects. Some thought it rather strange that the minister who believed that God from all eternity had unchangeably fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass, should be so displeased when it had come to pass that a Methodist preacher had visited that place, and preached doctrines contrary to what they had learned. Although he did all he could to prevent our preaching, and to keep his people from hearing us, it was unavailing; the people would hear and judge for themselves. When he found he could not defend his peculiar doctrines which he and his people had learned, he called in the aid of a neighboring minister, the Rev. Mr. W. This gentleman undertook to defend the beloved doctrines which the people had learned. He preached from Jer. xlvi. 10: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

1. He undertook, first, to show that God had from eternity decreed whatever comes to pass, and, of course, every event was in exact accordance with God's unchangeable counsel.

2. That notwithstanding God had decreed the actions of all men, yet all men were free moral agents, and accountable for what they do as much as though their actions had not been decreed! When he had established both these doctrines to his own perfect satisfaction,

he paused, and, looking around on all the people, he said, "I suppose you will say, 'Now, if you please, *reconcile the decrees of God with man's free agency.*'" He then lifted up both his hands and stood in perfect silence a moment, then solemnly said, "I frankly acknowledge I cannot, — let us pray;" and so dismissed the people by prayer.

As strange as it may have seemed to the Rev. Mr. G., even this discourse did not convince the people of the truth of the doctrines they had learned, nor prevent them from hearing us preach. The good man was at length obliged to submit to God's decrees, although he fought them bravely for a long while; he had to submit to witness a Methodist society formed within his parish, and to lose some of his good members, who became convinced of the errors of some of the doctrines they had learned, and of the truth of Methodism.

In another part of the circuit, I was invited to preach in a gentleman's house on a week-day evening. Several of the villagers attended, and among them was the Rev. Mr. H. I endeavored to show the necessity of Christians maintaining their religious character in a world where we were beset by so many evil influences. In order to give any force to such an exhortation, I was under the necessity of showing that it was possible to fall from grace. When I had finished, suspecting, from his venerable appearance, that the old gentleman present was a minister, I gave an opportunity for any to speak who might wish. Upon this, the elder arose and remarked that he disagreed with the young man in the matter of *falling from grace*. He thought the doctrine which had been taught was very erroneous and dangerous. It was some apology, however, for the preacher, that he was but a *young man*, and he presumed that he

had not yet formed much acquaintance with his Bible. He would furthermore say that it was a very *unnatural* doctrine; the heart of a Christian did not naturally incline to believe it; but to a simple-hearted Christian it was very revolting.

To illustrate this last remark, he related the following circumstance: He said that some years ago, among the fruits of the labor of Elder S., a missionary in Canada, was an aged Dutch woman. She experienced a hope, and wished to be baptized and join the church. She was about eighty years old, but had never learned to read; and until this late time of life she had remained almost entirely thoughtless about religion. She was, therefore, a real child of nature. On examining her for baptism, he inquired of her respecting her experience and doctrinal views; and among the questions he proposed, was whether she believed it was possible to fall from grace. But the doctrine was so *unnatural*, that she could not understand the question. At length he put it in this form: "Do you think, that, after Christ has gotten one of his elect children away from the devil, the devil can ever get him back again?" To this she replied, "O la, no! for if the devil is strong enough to get a saint away from Christ, he would have been strong enough to have held on to him in the first place, and not let Christ have taken him away." Upon this, the Rev. gentleman sat down. I then arose and remarked, that, as to my being but a young man, it was my misfortune and not my fault. I might outgrow it in time. My venerable friend, I suppose, was once but a young man, but he had outgrown this misfortune. As to the aged Dutch woman, to whom allusion had been made, it seems she was very ignorant of the Bible; and I did not quite agree with my venerable friend, for I did

not think her testimony proved the doctrine false or unnatural. Now, I said, I will leave it for these friends present to judge, which knew the most about this subject, and which ought to be believed; those men who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, whose words I have quoted,—such men as the prophet Ezekiel, St. Paul, St. Peter, &c.,—or this old lady, who could not read the Bible, and who had lived all her days without thinking much about the subject of religion. For my part, I do not think she was a very good theologian, and shall therefore prefer the decision of the sacred writers, although they may have been somewhat younger than this old lady. At this, the old gentleman seemed somewhat nettled, and said, “Young man, direct your discourse to me, if you please, that I may reply.” I said, “Sir, I have nothing to say to you, as I cannot hope to convince you, for I am but a young man.” So I prayed and dismissed the meeting; and the reverend gentleman immediately left the room. He did not even bid me good-night.

It was exceedingly difficult to preach in any place in those days without coming in contact with the views of some of our hearers. The peculiar doctrines of Calvinism had been so long inculcated among the people, under the imposing title of “Doctrines of Grace,” that many really seemed to think that Methodism was quite a graceless system. In almost every place we had to give account of ourselves to our Calvinist hearers.

In the town of G. I preached at a gentleman’s house one week-day afternoon, from Phil. i. 6: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Among other things, I remarked that, although the apostle spoke thus confidently of his brethren at Phil-

ippi, yet I believed that a good work had been many times begun where it did not issue in full and final salvation. The *awakening* of a sinner was a good work begun; yet I did not believe that every sinner who had been awakened by the Spirit would be saved. Nor did I believe that, in every case where this good work had been begun, and had been carried on even to conversion, final salvation would necessarily follow, for men may fall from grace.

It happened that Rev. Mr. R. was present, and, after preaching, he invited me to take tea at his house, which was near by. I consented, and told him I would be there in about an hour. When I arrived, I found he had invited several of his friends to be present, with a view, it seemed, to have a little discussion respecting the discourse, in which I had crossed his track somewhat. So, after introducing me to his friends, one by one, he drew forward a large rocking-chair, and said, very pleasantly, "Sit down, Mr. Spicer, you must be very much fatigued; you have had a hard task to perform this afternoon. It must, I think, be very hard work when a man is obliged to contradict his text in order to maintain his doctrinal system. St. Paul was persuaded that where God had begun a good work, he would carry it on; but you are persuaded that God sometimes begins a good work and never finishes it. You must be tired, so do be seated in this easy-chair, and rest yourself a little."

So I sat down, while all around were smiling apparently at my expense. "Well, sir," said I, "let me give you a text to preach from, to entertain and edify us all. These words, if you please, 'All things are yours.'" So he began by remarking, that all God's promises were ours, if we were good Christians; and all God's providences should be overruled to our good, etc. He gave a

very good brief exposition of the text. When he got through, I inquired if my neighbor's horse were not mine, if I am a good Christian. "O, surely not," said he; "your neighbor's horse is not included in the things to which this alludes." "Why, sir," said I, "my neighbor's horse is a thing, and the text says, '*All things* are yours.'" He replied, "If it is a thing, the text gives you no title to it." "My dear sir," said I, rising from the chair, "do take this seat, for you must be tired. To contradict one's text must be hard work: do sit down and rest yourself a little." Having been met on his own ground, he and his friends smiled, and the conversation turned upon a subject upon which we were all agreed, and the hour was spent very pleasantly.

I occasionally preached in the town of Granville, at the house of my brother. He lived in the neighborhood of a Baptist church, and was surrounded by Baptist professors. I do not recollect that there was one Methodist in all that part of the town. At this time the state of religion was exceedingly low in the place. I was informed that, the Sabbath before I came there, only six or eight persons attended church, although it was a very pleasant day. I had, as I thought, reason to fear that their Calvinistic notions respecting falling from grace were working mischief among them; so I concluded I would preach on the subject of Falling from Grace.

It was on a week evening; my brother's large kitchen was well filled, and Elder R., their minister, was present. My text was 2 Peter ii. 20: "For if, after they have escaped the pollution of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." After showing briefly in what way we might escape the pollution of the

world, or, in other words, become converted, I endeavored to prove that it is possible to backslide, to be entangled and be overcome again by the pollutions of the world, or in other words to fall from the Divine favor; and that in such case the latter end would be worse than the beginning; they would be in danger of perishing forever. I brought forward a large number of proofs and arguments, drawn from the Scriptures, to establish these points. When I was through, I asked the Elder if he wished to make any remarks. He arose, and in a very kind and Christian spirit observed that he was very sorry to be obliged to differ from me; that he considered the doctrine I had preached to be unscriptural and very dangerous in its tendency. So he took up my arguments, and endeavored to show their fallacy; and, referring to the passages of Scripture to which I had alluded, gave them a different explanation. After talking about half an hour, trying to repair the mischief which I had done, and expressing his extreme regret that I had introduced this subject, and inculcated a false and dangerous doctrine, which he feared would injure the feelings of Christian brethren, he sat down. I then arose and told the people that from what had been said it would appear that I had preached false and dangerous doctrine; and if it were so, I ought to make some apology, or, perhaps, a confession. So I went on to say that some five or six years ago I came to Granville to visit my brother, and it happened at a time when there was a great revival of religion in this place. I recollect that, on the Sabbath which I spent here, I went to church, and although it was in the season of the year when the roads were rather bad, I counted around their church sixty wagons and sleighs. And it was with difficulty I could get into the house, so as to get a sight of the minister. This

same Elder R. preached. Well, how is the state of things now? I have been told since I came here, that last Sabbath this same Elder R. preached in the same pulpit, and had only six or eight hearers; and I came to the conclusion that the people had become entangled again in the pollutions of the world — had fallen from grace. But it seems that I am under a mistake; that you are not backslidden, if you do live in the neglect of the public ordinances, if you do live without having prayers in your families, if you do spend the Sabbath in idleness and sleep, and if, occasionally, some of you get angry and use profane language, or are seen lounging around rum-holes and sometimes tippling; you are not fallen from grace, you are God's dear children, you are having a winter season, taking "deeper root," as your minister expresses it. You are all in the way to heaven. Just then I felt the Elder, who sat by my side, gently pull the skirt of my coat. I turned around, and he said, in a whisper, "I beg of you don't say anything more." I replied, I am making my confession. I am charged with preaching false doctrine, and if it is so, I ought to confess my faults. So I went on, until he spoke out and said, "Do stop; you have said enough." So, after having freed my mind in this way of apology and confession, I ceased, and closed the meeting.

Next morning, before breakfast, Elder R. came to see me, and was invited to take breakfast with the family. After all had become seated at the table, he very kindly remarked that he was exceedingly sorry I had introduced the subject of falling from grace; he feared it would do a great deal of harm. I asked him what harm it could possibly do? I remarked that if the people in that place were divided from all eternity into the elect and the reprobates, I could not see what harm my discourse

would do. The reprobates could sustain no harm; for they would not be saved, if I had not preached. And it could not harm the elect; for, if they could not fall from grace, they would be saved notwithstanding my preaching. "Well," said he, "I think it will injure Christians, by leading them away from trusting in God, and lead them into sin." On this, I contrived to turn the conversation to an entirely different subject. In a little while I said, "Elder R., I should like your views on one subject on which I have thought; who do you think will be the most indebted to grace, and be the happiest in heaven, the sinner, who has had much forgiven, or the one who has had only little forgiven?" "O," said he, "we are told that 'they that have much forgiven will love much.'" "Then you suppose," said I, "that such will be the most happy in heaven?" "Well," said he, "I suppose they will." Upon this, I dropped my knife and fork, and, lifting up my hands, I exclaimed, "O, Elder R., how comforted I feel in view of my course last evening! According to your statement, I have led the elect into sin, but they will be brought back again, for they cannot fall from grace, you say, so as to perish; their sins will all be forgiven, and they will love much, and be happier in heaven. I perceive my preaching will do great good." Elder R. finished his breakfast without referring to the discourse again.

Brother Bromley, with whom I travelled, was very kind to me, even as a father to his son. He gave me many lessons, which I have remembered, and by which, in many instances, I have endeavored to regulate my conduct. We used to meet each other every fortnight, when I had to take my turn and preach before him, and he would very kindly tell me my faults. I recollect, one time, I was giving an account to him of the various

appointments I had attended since we had met, and I said that at such a place I did not preach because there were so few present; I only prayed with them and dismissed the meeting. He said, "If that is the way you serve the people when they take pains to come to meeting, it will not do for me to give out appointments for you. Did not the few, who did attend, deserve a good sermon as much as though the house had been full?" I confess I was rather confounded, and made up my mind to do so no more. And I do not recollect that I have ever done the like since.

Toward the close of the year I became convinced that it was not good for a man to be alone. I desired a companion and a home. After duly weighing the matter, and taking counsel of my senior brother, I concluded to marry Miss Phebe Jones, then living with her brother in a town adjoining my circuit. We had been acquainted with each other about three years. We were united in marriage some time in March, in 1811.

In consequence of taking this step, I was, at the session of the ensuing Conference, discontinued or dropped. This was not because I had violated any divine precept, or any rule of our discipline; but I had violated a rule which had been adopted by the New York Conference some years before, concerning which I had no knowledge until it was made to bear upon my case.

The year following this event, was, of course, a year of deep trials to me; but I suppose I did not feel quite as bad as I should if I had violated the law of God, and brought disgrace on the church or the ministry. Many sympathized, but none reproached me. The Quarterly Conference immediately gave me license as a local preacher, and I labored here and there as opportunity offered. During some part of the winter I taught a

school in the town of Shoreham. I endeavored to study and improve my mind, so that I trust it was not wholly a lost year to me, nor eventually to the church. Probably it was all for the best.

The resolution of the Conference to which I have alluded, if I recollect, subjected the preacher, who should marry the first year of his probation, to be discontinued; or, if he married the second year, he should remain on probation a third year. Those who voted for this resolution, I suppose, thought it did not appear well for a man just entering on the work of the ministry, to be seen seeking himself a wife immediately; and that such early marriages would burden the church with families beyond its means to support. The first reason would have had some weight, if the apostle had not long since decided that *marriage is honorable in all*; in preachers, I suppose, as well as others. From this decision I concluded that a preacher has a right to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other men, if he shall deem it expedient. And as to burdening the church with a family, there may have been a time when this argument might have had some weight, but I have never seen that time in the Methodist church, and I am sure it does not now exist. If there be any burdens in this matter, the preacher and his family will have their full share in bearing them; so that the people need not complain. I think, therefore, the preacher must be the best judge of his duty and proper course in this matter.

It is, no doubt, a matter of prudence, and, indeed, his duty, to consult his senior in office before taking such a step, for the discipline of the church requires it. But I do not think it belongs to the church, or any part of the church, to determine when, and who a preacher shall marry, provided his marriage be not with an unbeliever,

but with all due prudence, and under such circumstances as will probably increase his comfort and usefulness. I think that, in general, preachers can be more useful when married than in a single state. They are certainly less exposed to a certain class of temptations and remarks. It is not their families that make men burdens to the church, but it is generally their own want of talents, activity, and deep and ardent piety.

On Brandon circuit I found many very kind friends, who received me very cordially into their houses, and who bore with my deficiencies and inexperience. The names of Young, Smith, Horton, Wheat, Hotchkiss, Eaton, Lamb, and many more, will long be remembered with pleasure and gratitude. But they are nearly all gone to their graves. However, many of their children and their grand-children are the living witnesses of the truth. In many instances these are among the most pious and active members of our church.

## THURMAN CIRCUIT.

1812.

Rehabilited. — Travelled Thurman Circuit. — Introduction of Methodism. — Moses Woodward and Cross. — Rev. R. Jacobs drowned. — Rev. Henry Ryan. — First association. — State of Methodism in 1812. — Inconvenience. — Small support. — Laborious services. — Attachment to Calvinism. — Public interview with a good deacon. — Opposition of Rev. Mr. A. — Present state of Methodism.

After having been laid aside one year, as already stated, preaching here and there as a local preacher, I again obtained a recommendation to travel, and at the ensuing Conference I was again admitted on trial, and was appointed on Thurman circuit. This was a two weeks' circuit, and I travelled alone.

This circuit was in New York State, near the head of the Hudson river, embracing nearly the whole of ~~Green~~ County. Hudson river here consists of two

branches, and the circuit embraced all the inhabitants in their vicinity. All the territory of country embraced in Warren County was at that time called "Thurman's Patent."

At that time, Methodism had not been long established in this region. Messrs. Josiah Woodward and Samuel Crane and their families were the first who joined the Methodists in these parts. Mr. Woodward had removed here from some place in Massachusetts. He had been brought up in the Protestant Episcopal Church, and ever since he had been at the head of a family, he had been in the practice of having prayers in his family; — that is, of reading a prayer; — but he has often said to me, that, at that time, he knew nothing about religion, except its external forms. He said that, as he felt no interest in the subject of religion in his heart, the outward forms were sometimes rather irksome to him, especially the constant repetition of his family prayer; yet, as he knew no better way, he supposed he must continue its repetition. Once, when his minister came to visit him, he opened his mind to him on this subject, telling him how little comfort the repetition of his *forms* of prayer afforded, for want of feeling a *spirit* of prayer. He desired to know how he might improve in this matter. His minister told him he thought, if he would take *a glass of wine* before he commenced praying, it would greatly assist him in the performance of this duty. What a blind guide! It showed how little he knew about religion, or the *spirit* of prayer.

When Mr. Woodward removed to this place, he found himself in a neighborhood where scarcely any attention was paid to religion, even to its outward forms. It happened, about this time, that Rev. Richard Jacobs, a local preacher, who resided somewhere in the northern

part of the State, made an attempt to visit this part of the country, in order to preach to the people. But in crossing the eastern branch of the river, near the outlet of Schroon Lake, he was unfortunately drowned. The news that a Methodist preacher was drowned excited some inquiry what kind of men Methodist preachers were. In answer to this inquiry, Mr. Woodward was told that they were such as were spoken of in the Scriptures as "false teachers," "wolves in sheep's clothing," "who would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect." It was said they denied the decrees of God, and believed it possible to fall from grace, &c. This strange account of them awoke a strong desire in the inquirers to see a Methodist preacher.

About this time, Henry Ryan, a Methodist preacher, from Dutchess County, New York, came into the neighborhood on some business, and put up for a few weeks with Mr. Samuel Crane. By means of his pocket Bible, the family somehow discovered that he was a Methodist preacher, and informed Mr. Woodward that there was a Methodist preacher lodging with them. Immediately, Mr. W. went over to see him, and, after conversing with him awhile, and learning what Methodism really is, he invited him to preach at his house the next Sabbath. To this Mr. Ryan consented, and his preaching brought new things to the ears of the people.

Mr. Woodward's religious views disposed him rather favorably towards Methodism; for he already believed in man's free-agency, and in the general atonement. It was the work of the Spirit on the heart, on which he needed instruction, and on this subject he received great light from the teachings of the stranger.

Mr. Crane had been brought up a Calvinist. He had been taught that God had, from all eternity, unchange-

ably foreordained whatever comes to pass; and that he had eternally elected some men to everlasting life, and reprobated all others to eternal death. And that the number of either the elect or the reprobates could not be increased by any means whatever. But with this teaching he was never fully satisfied. I recollect hearing him say that the minister who was his instructor for many years, would frequently preach these peculiar doctrines of Calvinism in the morning, and in the afternoon would preach to sinners, and tell them they must repent, and that salvation was free for them if they would come to Christ. He would warn and invite sinners with great earnestness and apparent sincerity.

To Mr. Crane's mind, all this appeared entire inconsistency. He said that frequently he became exceedingly vexed with himself because he could not see the propriety and consistency of such preaching. He supposed it must be as the minister said, for he was a good man, and a very learned man; and of course it must be owing to his own ignorance and dulness that he could not understand it. On one occasion, as he was returning home from church, meditating on what he had heard, he became so vexed with himself, on account of his dulness of apprehension, that he suddenly stopped and commenced pounding his head with his fist, for he really thought his stupidity must be owing to his having an uncommonly thick skull. But he found it did no good. He never could succeed to get the peculiarities of Calvinism into his head so as to reconcile them with common sense.

When Mr. Crane came to hear Methodism, he found a system that seemed to harmonize with itself, with the Scriptures, with common sense, and with experience.

He obtained such a view of truth as he never had before; he was therefore ready to embrace it with all his heart. It opened to his understanding new views of the divine government, and of the plan of salvation.

After Mr. Ryan had preached here a few times, he formed a class, consisting of *seven* members:—Mr. and Mrs. Woodward, their son David and daughter Rachael; Mr. and Mrs. Crane and their daughter Rebecca. Before leaving the place, Mr. Ryan told them there was to be a quarterly meeting on an adjoining circuit, and advised Brother W. to attend it, and see the presiding Elder of the district, and apply to him to have a regular preacher sent among them. He did so, and Timothy Dewey and Lorenzo Dow were sent among them. Each came once in four weeks, and this place was taken into the adjoining circuit. This was in the year 1798. Somewhere about this time a family by the name of Noble, who were Methodists, removed from Ireland and settled in Johnsburgh; and thus Methodism was introduced into that town.

In 1810, Thurman's Patent was set off as a two weeks' circuit, and called Thurman Circuit. It has since been divided into four, which are now called Warren, Schroon, Johnsburgh, and Lutzerne.

At the time I travelled here there was only *one* Methodist meeting-house in all these parts; now, in 1850, there are *nine*. It then embraced a newly-settled country, rough and poor. The accommodations for a preacher's family, and their means of support, were very scanty. The only place I could obtain for a residence consisted of one room, having only one small window. The room was so small that it could contain only our bed, a table, three chairs, one chest, and two trunks. On one side of the fireplace was a little closet, which

contained our table-dishes and some of our provisions. This room served us as our parlor, dining-room, kitchen and bed-room; and it was also my study. But we were not much mortified to appear thus poor, for many of our neighbors around us were poor also, and we appeared as well as a large portion of our brethren on the circuit.

Although our friends were generally poor on this circuit, they were generally very cordial. There was at that time very little money circulating in these parts. On this account, our contributions consisted principally in such articles of provision as our friends could spare. All the support I received from the circuit, during the whole year, amounted to only eighty-five dollars; perhaps one half of this was cash. At the ensuing Conference, I received fifteen dollars from the Conference funds, which is all I ever received from that source in my life, although I have been deficient in my claim *twenty-seven* years out of forty, which I have served the church. Thus it will be perceived that my income, in 1812, was one hundred dollars; and with this sum I contrived to support my family; for, as early in my history as this, I had adopted my "Economical Creed," which has ever since regulated my temporal affairs. The article in my creed to which I allude, reads thus, "I will live within my income."

I shall always remember the family of Father Woodward. They put themselves to considerable inconvenience to accommodate us with a room, and would receive nothing for rent. The old people have long since gone to their reward.

My work on this circuit was very laborious; it extended through ten towns, and I had to preach thirteen times in two weeks. There were one hundred and

seventy-two members in society. I had very frequently to cross the two branches of the Hudson river, over which there was but one bridge. I used generally to ford the river; but when too high for this, I would get set across in a canoe, and let my horse swim after it. Our preaching places were mostly in private houses, for it was not always that we could get the use of school-houses.

This part of the country was settled principally by people of intelligence, accustomed to great industry and economy; and a considerable portion of them were professors of religion. But Methodism was comparatively new among them. There was a prevailing fondness for Calvinism; many, however, scarcely knew why, unless it was because it had been believed by their Puritan fathers, and was called the "Doctrines of Grace." It was no uncommon thing for our preachers to have to give an account of themselves and their peculiar doctrines when they had done preaching.

On one occasion, in the town of C., after I closed the meeting held in a school-house, an elderly gentleman, a deacon of the church, desired the people to be seated, as he wished to ask the preacher a few questions. So all took their seats, and he proposed the following question: "Do you, sir, believe that God, from all eternity, knew whatever would come to pass?" To this question, I promptly replied in the affirmative. "Well," said he, "now I have another question to ask. I want to know why God knew, from all eternity, whatever would come to pass?" I replied, that "he knew it because he was *infinitely wise*." "O no," said he, "that is not the reason." Then I said, "Will you please to tell us why he foreknew all things?" "Because," said he, "he had eternally decreed all things that would take place."

I said, "Do you think, sir, that God *decreed* those things *before he knew them?*" "Certainly!" said he; "or how could he have known they would take place?" "Well," I replied, "if the decree preceded his knowledge, his knowledge could not have been *eternal*, and the decrees must have been made before God had any knowledge! This is a way I have never thought of before to account for the many wicked and foolish things which take place among men. I now learn they are the result of God's decrees, which he made before he had any knowledge." The deacon evidently felt the difficulties of his Calvinistic system, and began to look for his hat, with a view to retire. After getting hold of his hat, he turned around, in evident confusion, and said, "Well, sir, you need not tell me anything about it. I believe there are no beings in heaven, earth, or hell, but what do the will of God, as he had eternally decreed they should." I replied, "Don't be in haste to go; hear me a moment, I pray you." He stopped, and I remarked, "It would be true that all beings did God's will, if they did what he from all eternity decreed they should do; for no doubt his decrees and his will harmonize. What he has decreed must be according to his good pleasure, and, of course, according to his will. But if this be so, that all beings in earth and in hell,—that is, all men and all devils,—do God's will, then all men and all devils will be saved; for the Saviour has taught us, that whoso doeth the will of his Father, the same are his mother, sister, and brother, and that they shall be saved. You perceive, my dear sir, that your system drives you into Universalism." He made no reply, but left the house. The people present all saw, and he evidently *felt*, the absurdity of this doctrine

of eternal decrees. We have now three churches in this town.

About this time I got an appointment to preach in the town of Bolton. Here I was assailed by Rev. Mr. A., the minister who was settled there. He heard me preach several times; at length he pitched battle with me. In my discourse, at one time, I had endeavored to make it appear that a sinner could do something before he was converted, for God vouchsafed him help; that God gave him a gracious influence by which he could repent and believe. I insisted that a sinner must do something before he is converted, or he never will be converted nor saved, — *he must repent*. He followed me in some remarks, and took up the statements which I had made, and declared they were "perfect nonsense." He said that no man could do anything towards securing his salvation until converted; when God had regenerated him, and he had become a new creature, he could repent, and not before, for repentance was a holy exercise.

When he had concluded, I gave out an appointment to preach there again in two weeks from that evening. He arose and said that he would preach on the same evening in the same neighborhood. Upon this, I altered my appointment to the afternoon, thinking I would go and hear him, and learn how his doctrine would sound when addressed to unconverted sinners. Accordingly, when the time came, I attended. He took for his text, "This poor man cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." Psa. xxxiv. 6. He first showed that the "poor man" here mentioned, is the sinner. The sinner, he said, is exceedingly poor, being destitute of all goodness and able of all ability to do anything by way of becoming any better. In the second place, he told us that our salvation is of grace:

the Lord must save us out of our troubles, or we shall never be saved.

After he had finished his discourse, he prayed and dismissed the meeting, without asking me to take any part, or seeming to know that I was present. The people, however, all took their seats; and, after a few moments, I arose, and asked the minister to be so good as to tell me whether the Lord saved the poor man out of his trouble before he cried to him, or afterward; and whether, if the poor man had not cried for deliverance, the Lord would have saved him out of his troubles? He replied that he was not disposed to have any controversy. But I continued to press the question, telling him that as he had entirely overlooked that part of his text which speaks of what the poor man did, I thought it due to his hearers that he should answer. Now, do let us know whether he cried to the Lord, before he was saved, or was he saved before he cried? Remembering what he had said when I was there two weeks before, and knowing that the people remembered it, he seemed to feel his difficulties. But, as I continued to press the question, he was obliged to say something. "Well," said he, "the crying unto the Lord is the act of this salvation; and, therefore, is the same thing as being saved." Now I understand you, said I; but this answer makes your text appear rather awkward: your text declares the act of crying unto the Lord to be the man's act, something which he did himself, not what the Lord did. Now you say that this act is the salvation; then this poor man saved himself out of all his troubles; but your text says, "the Lord saved him." How is this? "Well," said he, "you may cavil as much as you please; I have no more to say to you." So he and his friends commenced singing a hymn. But Calvinism gained nothing by this meeting;

some of its friends were rather ashamed of it. In this very neighborhood our people have since built a church, and Methodism has its proper share of influence.

Methodism had much to contend with in those days all through those parts, and my field of labor was very hard, yet the year passed away quite pleasantly. There was some revival, which resulted in a few conversions. Since those days our societies have prospered throughout all those parts, and Methodism has gotten a firm hold at present on the public sentiment.

## SARATOGA CIRCUIT.

1813.

Had something to do in getting an appointment here.—Good circuit, but poor success.—Sorry for folly.—Reflections.—Reproved two penurious brethren.—Tendencies of Calvinism.—An interview with a good deacon.

At the close of my labors on Thurman Circuit I took the liberty to converse freely with my presiding Elder, Rev. Peter Moriarty, respecting my situation and wishes. I mentioned to him some of my trials and difficulties. I told him I had a very hard circuit, and hard fare; that I had not much time to study, very few books, and no means by which to procure any more; my clothing was poor, and I could not get any better, for the trifle of property I possessed was, at present, unavailable. I desired he would use his influence to get me appointed the year ensuing to a better circuit. The good old man embraced me in his arms, and talked like a kind father; he told me he was well satisfied with my labors the past year, and he would see what he could do for me for the year ensuing. His kind words greatly comforted and cheered me, and I shall always remember him with good feelings, for he acted and talked like a friend and a father.

At the ensuing Conference I was appointed to Saratoga Circuit. This circuit, at that time, was considered the most desirable circuit in the whole district. It embraced a very fine tract of country; including the entire County of Saratoga, consisting of ten or twelve towns. The country was level, having good roads, the inhabitants generally somewhat forehanded, and several of our societies were quite strong.

To this circuit I removed my little family, where I found accommodations and kind friends. I felt quite thankful to God for so pleasant a field of labor, and to my presiding Elder for the interest he had taken in my welfare. But I have the least to say as to my success in the work that year of any year of my itinerant life. I know not that one sinner was converted through my instrumentality. I know not that I was the means of doing any good through the whole year, except it may be that I expelled a horse-jockey, who had been a dis-honor to the church for several years. I think I received but one member into the church, and he did not prove any honor to us. One of my successors, who followed me some years after, expelled him. I have no doubt that his expulsion was a greater blessing to the church than his admission. I must say, that, for three months after I first went on to this circuit, I never preached once with any liberty; and I did not preach ten times during the whole year with any satisfaction to myself or apparent benefit to others.

Before the year was closed I heartily repented having used any means to get appointed on this circuit, and I made up my mind never to choose for myself again, or desire my presiding Elder to use any influence to get me appointed on a good circuit, while I report myself as effective. And, accordingly, at the next Conference, I

said not a word to any man where I desired to go; for I can truly say, I had no desire to go to any particular place; I was resigned to go anywhere. To this day I am of the opinion that this cutting and carving for good appointments is wrong. It greatly embarrasses our superintendents in making out the appointments. Many times men choose places for which they are altogether unsuitable. I believe the Bishops, by means of the information they may obtain from the presiding Elders, and their own knowledge of us, are better judges of our adaptation to certain places than we are ourselves. We are too much interested in the case to judge correctly in such a matter. When we go where we are appointed, we may regard the hand of the Lord in our appointment, and if we have trials, we can say we did not bring them on ourselves, and can, with greater confidence, look to God for help.

And I think it is equally pernicious in its tendency, for our people to select their preachers. I have known great evils grow out of this practice. Instead of praying to the presiding Elders or to the Bishops, our people and preachers had much better pray to God to direct them to arrange the appointments — fitting places to men, and men to places. The practice to which I have alluded of self-seeking, prevails at the present day to quite an alarming degree, and I fear will yet greatly cripple our itinerancy.

Although the stewards were able to pay all the claims of my colleague and myself, it was not because all the members were liberal, but it was because, *first*, our claims were very light, not amounting in all to \$350, even including my house-rent; and, *secondly*, there were a few brethren who were liberal, and were resolved, for the honor of the circuit, to see us paid off. That all

were not liberal I had some reason to believe. I recollect two brethren who were forehanded farmers, and were considered by their neighbors as wealthy. One of them told me himself, after harvest, that he had more than a thousand bushels of grain in his barn. This man had paid but *sixty-eight cents* quarterage for the year, as his leader's class-book proved. As the preachers occasionally lodged at his house when they preached in the neighborhood, he supposed he did his part. I told him, on parting with him at the close of the year, that I had ascertained from his leader how little he had done to support preaching; and that, if I should be returned to the circuit, I should endeavor to find another place to put up when I came into that society, for I feared he grudged the oats our horses eat. And the last time going round the circuit, I called at the door of the other brother to whom I alluded. He asked me to come in; but I told him I did not feel free ever to enter his house again; for I had once, at his invitation, lodged with him a night, and he had charged me a quarter of a dollar for my entertainment. His leader had told me that usually he gave a dollar a year to support the gospel, but that when a preacher put up with him a night, he always deducted a quarter; and that for this reason he had paid but three quarters of a dollar this year. Both these brethren appeared somewhat confounded at my plain talk; but I thought they deserved reproof for their covetousness. I believe it did the first one some good, for I afterwards learned that he gave my successor a bushel of wheat soon after he moved on to the circuit. They have both let go their hold on the world long ago, and gone to their account.

Among the different denominations of Christian people in these parts, much good feeling prevailed; very little

bitterness and strife was manifested. But the state of religion was generally very low. Many professors of religion were in a backslidden state. I have no doubt that the peculiarities of Calvinism had their full share of influence in bringing about this inattention to religion and low state of piety. To tell sinners that all they do is in accordance with God's eternal decrees, is not at all calculated to awaken them; for they will infer that if their conduct is agreeable to God's decrees, he must be pleased with it, if he made his decrees to suit himself. The doctrine of election and reprobation, as taught in this system, only serves to lull men asleep. They would very naturally conclude that if they had been eternally elected, they certainly would be saved; they would not miss of heaven. And if they were not of the definite number of the elect, whatever they might do could not secure their salvation.

Many professors of religion were in a backslidden state, and yet believing they would not fall from grace because they belonged to the number of the elect which could not be diminished. Nothing was more common than to hear professors insisting that they could not fall from grace, and declare that it is utterly impossible for a man to live without sin.

We were often obliged to attack these errors in order to bring men to their senses on the subject of religion. I became acquainted with a good deacon, who invited me home with him. We had much conversation on various doctrines, but especially that of Christian perfection. He seemed almost ready to give up his notions when I left him the next morning. The next time I came around, the old gentleman, after I had concluded the meeting, which was held in a school-house, came forward, and in a very friendly manner asked me to accom-

pany him home and lodge at his house. He said, "I want to talk with you a little more about this living without sin." I asked him if he did not think we had all better try to live without sin. "O, yes," said he, "but we cannot do it, however much we may try." He said that, since I was at his house, he had found a text of Scripture, which perfectly established him in his opinion that no man could live a moment without sin. I desired him to show me the text here, and we would talk about it in presence of the people. "Well," said he, "it is this: 'The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?'" I said, "Do you suppose that this text describes the heart of a Christian? I think this is not the character of a Christian's heart, but the unrenewed heart of a sinner." "O, no!" said he; "it is the description of the Christian's heart; at any rate, it is the description of my heart." "My dear sir," I said, "do you say that your heart is deceitful and desperately wicked?" "Yes," said he, "it is indeed." I then started back a step or two, and said, "Well, sir, if that is the case, I shall not go to your house to-night, for you may abuse me and perhaps take my life." "O, no!" said he; "Mr. Spicer, I won't do you any harm." "Ah!" said I, "deacon, I shall not venture it, for you don't know what you will do, for you say you don't know your heart, only that it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The people smiled and dispersed, and the deacon went home alone to ponder on the text, and I trust to try to get a better heart, —

"A heart in every thought renewed  
And full of love divine;  
Perfect and right and pure and good,  
A copy, Lord, of thine!"

But I have no doubt the deacon's heart was then much better than his creed.

I remained but one year on this circuit, and was removed to Montgomery, a circuit adjoining.

## MONTGOMERY CIRCUIT.

1814.

Nothing to do in making this appointment. — Mr. G. Clark's family. — Presiding Elder's sudden death. — Influence of preaching. — Palatine. — Dutchman's experience. — Arminianism. — Outlines of a discourse. — Rev. Mr. T. — Strange account of a converted Deist. — Reformed Methodists.

The Conference was held this year in New York. I was here ordained deacon. I said nothing to any one respecting my appointment for the ensuing year; but I committed the matter in prayer to God. When my appointment was announced on Montgomery Circuit, although I knew it was a hard circuit, and had heretofore given the preachers a very poor support for their families, I rejoiced in my heart. I felt that I had had nothing to do in making the appointment, only to pray about it. I thought the appointment was of God; and if I got into any trouble during the year, I could look to him with confidence for help, for I should feel that I was in the order of his Providence, and could expect help from above.

This was a large circuit at that time. It lay along on the north side of the Mohawk River, and extended to the Sacondaga River, and up as far as Lake Pleasant. I think it embraced *fourteen towns*, in which there were only three Methodist churches.

My family occupied a single room in the house of Mr. Gardner Clark, in Amsterdam. Mrs. C. had lately joined our society, and Mr. C. had become much awakened to the subject of religion. The family of Mr. C.

were all remarkably kind to us; and all the family became religious shortly after we came there, and joined our church; and all of them who are now living have remained faithful to this day. The widow of the late Dr. Levings is their second daughter.

Before our first quarterly meeting was held, our presiding Elder, Rev. Peter Moriarty, died very suddenly. He was at his home in Hillsdale, N. Y., and had designed to start early on Saturday morning to attend his quarterly meeting a few miles distant. But on that morning he was found dead in his bed. On the Sabbath following, his body was taken to the quarterly meeting, where his funeral was attended, and he was buried near the church. In 1850, I visited his grave. Brother Moriarty was a man of undoubted piety and sterling integrity. He was remarkable for decision of character. He had travelled thirty-two years.

Moses Amerson travelled with me on this circuit. He was a very good and zealous brother, and of a most amiable disposition. He died a few years after in Christian triumph.

We were much blessed in our labors during the year. We formed six new societies, and had the pleasure of reporting at the next Conference an increase of something more than one hundred members. It was very interesting to observe what a change the gospel would make in those neighborhoods where we could get the people's attention. In such places, the people, instead of being engaged in visiting, fishing, hunting, or lounging about taverns on the Sabbath, as they had been accustomed to do, were seen going to the school-house, or the house of some neighbor, to hear the gospel preached, or to unite in holding a prayer-meeting. Instead of songs of mirth in their dwellings, there were hymns of praise;

and, instead of profane swearing, there was heard the voice of prayer. In several places our hearts were greatly cheered in witnessing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among the people.

Toward the close of the year, I visited Palatine, a little village up the Mohawk River, some thirty miles from Schenectady. There were at that time no Methodists in that place, except an aged lady, who lived with her daughter. The people were mostly of Dutch descent. Their church was about a mile from the village. I was told there never had been a religious meeting held in the village. In the estimation of the people, the church was the only place to worship God; and, as near as I could learn, their religion was nearly all confined to the church and to the Sabbath day; that they generally laid aside their religion with their Sunday dress.

I called at the principal tavern in the place and obtained liberty to preach in a ball-room in the evening. I then went nearly all through the village, and, calling at their doors, informed the people that a stranger would preach in the ball-room in the evening. When evening arrived, I went to see what, for a congregation, I had gathered, and found quite a large company, but they seemed exceedingly careless. They could not very well associate religion with a ball-room. They were laughing and talking merrily.

I commenced singing a very solemn hymn, and when I had finished it I kneeled down and prayed. But during my prayer, I could hear the people whispering and laughing around me. I arose from my knees and commenced relating some incidents of my life in a way rather amusing, until I had gotten their attention. I then read a text from the Bible, and preached.

After preaching, a man who lived a mile out of the

village invited me to go and lodge at his house, and I gladly accepted his invitation. He was a very simple-hearted Dutchman, and I believe was really pious. He related his experience with considerable feeling, which, if his peculiar style of broken English could be preserved, as it fell from his lips, would be a little amusing as well as instructing. It was somewhat as follows:—

“I knows noting of de Metodish till two years ago I attend de camp-meetin’. At de camp-meetin’ I hears de ministers preach very strong, so as I never hears before. I feels very bad, and says, ‘Well, I must go home;’ and I goes home, but I kept feelin’ very bad in my heart. Someting keeps saying to me, ‘You are a great sinner, and you must pray;’ so I prays to mine God wid all my soul. I says, ‘O my God, have mercy on me, and take away dis bad feelin’ and make me good.’ But I was worse and worse for tree or four days. I could n’t eat anyting, and I could n’t sleep, and I tinks I was goin’ to die; I was a great sinner, and should go to hell. But one day de Lord speak to me and say, ‘I forgive all your sins;’ den I feels very happy. After a while, I tinks I would join de church, but der was no Metodish here, so I joins de Luterans. But some of my bredren are so like de wicked, I can’t take any fun wid em. I should like to be a Metodish.” This was the substance of this dear man’s experience. Some years after this, there was a Methodist society formed in the place, and he united with them. I preached here several times, and had reason to believe that some good results followed; several persons appeared to be awakened.

At the time I travelled on this circuit, Methodism was not very well understood in these parts. *Arminianism* was a very offensive term to many people. They supposed Arminianism was a *graceless* system, which a

good man could scarcely embrace. I preached one evening, at the house of one of our friends, to a company of twenty or thirty persons, and, after the meeting was closed, the neighbors gathered in little groups around the room, and were conversing on various subjects. One of the brethren, who sat not far from me, inquired of his neighbor, in an under tone, how he liked the sermon? His neighbor replied, that he perceived the preacher was not an Arminian. I could not well avoid hearing this conversation, and, suspecting that neither of them knew what Arminianism is, I thought I would join in the conversation. So I addressed myself to the neighbor, and inquired what he understood by Arminianism? He replied, that he did not know that he had a right view of it, but he had always supposed the idea of Arminianism was taken from the arm,—at the same time holding up his arm, with his elbow a little bent, and motioning as if he were eagerly gathering in something with his hand,—carrying the idea that a man's *own arm* had saved him. I could scarcely refrain from smiling; but the man appeared so candid I could not laugh at him. I told him, however, his idea was quite incorrect. I then undertook to give him the history of that eminent divine and scholar, James Arminius, and of his theological lectures at Leyden, in Germany. I showed him what were the "Five Points" on which he and his colleague Gomarus differed. I told him I thought that Arminius had the right side of the question; and if Arminianism be understood as it is set forth in his own writings, and not as is represented by his enemies, I must confess that I was an Arminian. This conversation arrested the attention of all the company, and the man thanked me and said this information was all perfectly new. I think

all who were present learned on this occasion what they ought long before to have known.

I had an appointment on a week-day in a place where we had no society, and I took for my text, 2 Thess. ii. 13 : "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." I endeavored to make it appear that this text proved nothing favorable to the doctrine of *eternal election*. I remarked that those to whom Paul addressed this language, could not have been chosen to salvation from the *beginning of eternity*, for this very good reason, that eternity had no beginning; and that it could not have been from the *beginning of time*, for it is said they "were chosen through sanctification of the Spirit;" but they had no existence when time first began, and the Spirit could not sanctify them before they had any existence. Nor yet were they chosen from the *beginning of their existence*, for it is declared they were chosen through "belief of the truth," and they could not believe the truth when they first began to exist. Children must, in some measure, understand the truth before they are capable of believing it.

As their election could not have been from the beginning of eternity, or of time, or of their existence, I inquired what was the beginning to which the apostle alluded? And I endeavored to make it appear that it was the *beginning of the preaching of the gospel at Thessalonica*. This I made to appear by comparing Acts xvii. 1—4 with 1 Thess. i. 4, 5, 9. The apostle, alluding to the history of their conversion, says, "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; having received the word, ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." These passages show *when and how they*

were chosen to salvation. They embraced the gospel from the *beginning* of its being preached to them. They were saved "by grace through faith." And I told the people that this is the way that men must now be saved, and I exhorted them to make their "calling and election sure."

When I had finished, Rev. Mr. T. arose and said he differed very much from the gentleman who had addressed them. He believed all who would be saved were eternally elected, neither were any others redeemed by Christ, nor would any others be effectually called but the elect only; and their number was so definite that it could neither be increased nor diminished. He said he thought that such preaching as they had just been hearing was contrary to the doctrines of grace, and calculated to mislead the people. I asked him if he thought that all the people in the town of G. were from all eternity divided into two classes, *elect* and *reprobate*? He said he did. I then said, "What is the use of your preaching? The elect will be saved if you do not preach, and the reprobates will be lost if you do." He replied, that his preaching was the means which God had decreed, by which to bring in the elect. I replied, that I would take the liberty to suggest that the people should test his belief in this doctrine by not raising any more money for his support, and see if he would not break God's decree. The people took the hint, and in less than a year he was seeking a call elsewhere.

The following circumstance was related to me by a brother, at whose house I put up several times. He was a licensed exhorter, and much esteemed among us. He said that before his conversion he was a deist; that he fell sick, and his physicians gave him up to die; and that both he and his friends believed he did die. He

said he heard his wife exclaim, "Isaac is dying — call father!" For a moment he lost sight of everything around him; and when he recovered his consciousness he appeared to himself to be out of his body. He saw his wife lay her hand on his face, and heard her say, "He is dead!"

He immediately found himself rising up from the room, and passing through the ceiling and the roof, and ascending through the air. Then, for the first time, the terrible thought rushed upon him that this was his soul, and that he was going to meet God in judgment. He endeavored to arrest his ascent, but in vain; he continued to ascend with increasing velocity. He saw his neighbors at work in their fields, and beheld all the country around. He cried for help, but none heeded him; he then commenced praying to God for mercy. He became filled with unutterable anguish and horror, still continuing to ascend. At length he wholly lost sight of the earth, and gave himself up for lost, when there appeared to his view something like a human hand above him, that seemed to make a motion for him to go back. Immediately he found that the impelling force which had drawn him onward had ceased, and he was again sinking toward the earth. He came down to his house, and passing through the roof and ceiling found himself in the room where his body lay, and his friends were standing around it, weeping. For a moment he was insensible, and then he found himself in his body as before.

This strange circumstance made a powerful impression on him; he soon recovered from his sickness, and never rested until he had given his heart to God. I make no comment on this strange account. I have no doubt that it seemed all real to him. And who can say

it was not? There may be something like this in the departure of human souls.

#### REFORMED METHODISTS.

The spirit of *reform* made its appearance among us during this year. It had originated a year or two before in the eastern part of the district. A few brethren, consisting principally of local preachers, had associated together for the purpose of reforming what they considered abuses among us. Our church government was not sufficiently democratic to suit their notions of things. They formed an organization, which they denominated "The Reformed Methodists." Episcopacy was denounced as downright *tyranny*; the people might choose their preachers, and the members of a class might choose their class-leader. Their class-meetings and love-feasts must all be held with open doors. One of their principal preachers found his way into the western part of this circuit, and succeeded to disaffect a class-leader and quite a number of his class, who withdrew from us and joined the organization.

These republican brethren went on finely for a few months, when they became convinced that republican Methodism was not without some difficulties. In one of their class-meetings, all the congregation took a notion to claim their undoubted right to stay in class, and accordingly did so. The school-house was full, and the leader commenced inquiring of his members, who were interspersed in the assembly here and there through the house, how they were getting along in their religious course. There was a sister present, who had that morning seen her class-leader gathering maple sap for making sugar; she thought it her duty to reprove him for Sabbath-breaking. Forgetting that it was her duty to have

conversed with him alone, she replied to his inquiry, that she thought she was getting along in religion as well as those did who gathered maple sap on Sunday. This answer so confounded the leader that he could go no further. The class-meeting stopped here amid the laugh of the young people; and some were, by this circumstance, pretty well convinced that some rules of discipline are necessary to keep society together. Republican Methodism soon lost its popularity all through these parts; and I believe that, at present, it is only known as among the things that *were* but *are not*.

The year I spent on this circuit was one of the most pleasant years of my life. I found very kind friends, whose liberality supplied abundantly all the wants of my family, and greatly endeared them to my affections. I generally enjoyed good liberty in preaching throughout the year. From my experience in connection with this circuit, I became well satisfied that, in general, the less we have to do in choosing our own field of labor, the better it is for us and for the church. I am very confident that if I had chosen my field of labor, it would not have been Montgomery circuit; and equally confident, that, if the brethren had chosen their preachers, I should not have been one of them. I believe the appointment was of God, and that God accompanied it with his special blessing. I was however removed at the end of one year; but I had no more to do in being sent away, than I had in being sent there. I left it all with God. I was removed to Troy.

## TROY STATION.

1815, 1816.

**Extent of the station. — Good revival. — Introduction of Methodism here. — Progress of Methodism. — Early fathers. — Rev. Dr. Lovings.**

At the Conference of 1815, I was stationed in the city of Troy. This station, at that time, embraced Troy, Lansingburgh, Waterford, Albia, Brunswick and West Troy. Here I was associated with Rev. Elijah Chichester, a local preacher, who for a number of years had been among our pioneers in the travelling connection, but now located and engaged in mercantile business. I generally preached in Troy, morning and afternoon, and Brother C. in the evening, while I went to Lansingburgh, a distance of three miles. To this place, I generally went on foot, and frequently returned the same evening. The other places I usually visited on week-day evenings once in two weeks. Our congregations in these places were but small, and our societies quite feeble.

During my first year in this station, we had a gracious revival in Troy, in which, during seven weeks, more than a hundred members were added to our society. During the second year, we had a good revival in Lansingburgh. When I came to this station there were in all the appointments one hundred and seven members, and when I left it there were two hundred and fifty.

At that time Troy was but a small place compared with what it is at present. Its early inhabitants were generally an enlightened and intelligent class of people, being mostly from the New England States. But owing to their early prejudices in favor of Congregationalism, they were not among the first in these parts to receive and cherish Methodism. There were, as early as in 1800, a few individuals who called themselves Metho-

dists; but some of them did not do themselves nor the cause of religion much honor.

Somewhere about the year 1804, Mr. John Wright, a member of the Wesleyan Methodists in England, came with his family to reside in Troy. On the next day after his arrival, being Sabbath, he set off to see if he could find any Methodist meeting, or any Methodist family. The first man whom he met, he asked whether there were any Methodists in the place. After pausing awhile, as though he was considering, he replied, — “No; there were some here awhile since, but I believe they have all been sent to State-prison!” This was rather discouraging to a stranger; however, hoping the man might be under a mistake, he continued his search. It being about the time of day for people to be assembled for worship, he continued his walk until, in passing a dwelling, he heard several voices united in singing. He paused, and soon recognized a Methodist hymn, which was familiar to him in his native land. He went in, and found a few Methodists, gathered at a brother’s house, holding a prayer-meeting. All the Methodists in the place had not been sent to the State-prison, nor did they all deserve to be sent there; for some had kept their garments and their consciences pure, even in Troy.

Although Methodism had an unfavorable beginning in this place, it has since greatly prospered. The First Methodist Church was erected in State-street, I think, in the year 1807, and, after having been occupied about twenty years, it was found quite too small to accommodate the congregation, and was therefore removed to make way for a larger one. In 1827, a very commodious brick building was erected. I think it was good policy in the society which built the first house, that

they built within their means, and therefore were not tormented twenty years with a church debt.

It was but a few years after this new house was built, when even this house was found to be too small to hold all the people who wished to attend; it was therefore resolved to build another in the north part of the city. This was soon accomplished by a few enterprising brethren, so that now we have a very beautiful house on the east side of North Second-street, in the midst of a dense population, and in a most delightful part of the city.

And such has been the increase of business and population in the entire south part of the city, that, a few years since, a new church was erected there on Third-street. And during the years 1848 and 9, a fourth has been built in quite the eastern part of the city, in Congress-street, on Ida Hill.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that Methodism is now regarded as no mean thing in Troy, but that it has a good hold on the community, which it is likely to maintain. In each of those places, which originally belonged to this station at the time I was stationed there, there is now a house of worship belonging to us, and a good society able to maintain a preacher among them. In West Troy they have two churches.

In Troy, Methodism has kept a steady onward course; its doctrines and its peculiar economy have become more and more popular, as they have become better understood. There is a good deal of Methodism now in several of the churches of other denominations in this city.

In this city, God has raised up many excellent men among us, who have labored and sacrificed much to promote Methodism. The names of Wright, Scoby, Foster, Loudon, Andres, Whipple, Clark and Curtis, with many others, will long be remembered. Their

names, I trust, will be found in the Lamb's Book of Life, and the Judge will say to each of them, —

“ Well and faithfully done,  
Enter into my joy,  
And sit down near my throne.”

Although most of these fathers of Methodism in Troy have fallen asleep, God has raised up others who are now living; the mantle of the Elijahs has fallen upon them; they are strong in the faith, and abundant in labors. The number of members now belonging to our church in Troy is 859. But it is impossible to tell the amount of good which Methodism has effected in this city, until it shall be seen in the eternal world. A great number have been awakened among us, who have united with other churches, — a great many have been converted who have removed to other places; and a great many, in the course of  *fifty* years, have gone to their reward.

Since my acquaintance with Methodism in Troy has commenced, there have been, I have no doubt, not less than *five thousand* sinners converted through its instrumentality, in that city alone, a large portion of whom, I trust, will reach heaven. What an encouragement is this, both to ministers and private members, not to be weary in well-doing! In due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

The late Dr. N. Levings started out into the ministry from Troy. At the time I was stationed here, he was a young man, an apprentice to the blacksmith's trade. I considered him a very pious young man, and often invited him to accompany me to my week-evening appointments, and set him to exhorting after me. He soon gave evidence to the brethren that God had called him to do something in his vineyard; and he obtained license

to preach; and not long after the term of his apprenticeship was expired, he was admitted into the travelling connection. By diligent application to study and his appropriate work as a preacher, Brother Levings soon distinguished himself as a minister. He filled some of our most important stations; and in every place he was very popular and useful. At the time of his death he was Financial Secretary of the American Bible Society.

## CAMBRIDGE CIRCUIT.

1817, 1818.

Origin of Methodism. — Father Ashton. — *Ashgrove* burying-ground. — Philip Embury. — Mr. Noble's sudden death. — D. Brown's dream and death. — Prejudices. — Influences of Calvinism. — Odd texts. — Queer preaching.

After remaining two years in Troy, at the Conference held in Middlebury, Vt., 1817, I was appointed to travel on Cambridge circuit. This circuit was situated in Washington county, N. Y., thirty or forty miles north of Troy. It embraced the place called *Ashgrove*, where a number of Wesleyan brethren from Ireland settled as early as 1787. These brethren applied to the Conference, which was held at Baltimore in 1788, for a preacher to be sent to labor among them; and, accordingly, Lemuel Smith was appointed to take charge of them, and form a circuit in that part of the country. This was the first society of Methodists which was formed north of Dutchess county; and here was erected the first Methodist church that was erected anywhere north of New York city.

The *Ashgrove* society was the hive of Methodism, and its common centre, to all this part of the country, for many years. The names of Ashton, Baker, Barber, Empy, Hannah, Nicholson, Fisher, and Armitage, will long be remembered in the history of Methodism in this

place. Their hearts and their hands were open to sustain our ministers in the labors and toils of earlier days.

Father Ashton, especially, was a great friend to the preachers. He had one room in his house fitted up with a bed, a table, chairs, &c., for the special accommodation of the preachers. This room was known far and near by the appellation of the "Preachers' Room." Here the preachers were at home as if the dwelling had been their own. In his last will, he gave a building-lot for a parsonage and a burying-ground. He also gave the furniture of the Preachers' Room, and a cow, for the benefit of the preachers who should be stationed on the circuit. He also encumbered his estate with a perpetual annuity of *ten dollars*, to be paid to the oldest single elder of the New York Conference. It would be well if our wealthy friends would more frequently imitate his example, in this kind of liberality. Why should not men who, under God, owe everything they have to the influence of Methodism, oftener remember their obligations when handing over their hoarded wealth to their sons and daughters? It often happens that men become rich and respectable through the influence of religion, who otherwise would have been poor and despised, whose property falls into the hands of wicked heirs, and is soon squandered. Why not set apart some portion of it to the cause of God while it is in their power?

The lot given by Mr. Ashton for a burying-ground, in Ashgrove, contains the remains of several of the early friends of Methodism. It is the resting-place of three of our early preachers— Embury, Noble, and Brown. The most noted of these is *Philip Embury*, whose name is mentioned in the sketch of our history contained in the Book of Discipline. His remains were originally deposited in a burying-ground a few miles north of this.

He was a local preacher from Ireland; by trade he was a house-carpenter; and for some time he resided in the city of New York. By means of the exhortation of a pious sister, a member of Mr. Wesley's society when in her native land, he was induced to commence preaching, in New York, to a few of his countrymen. He organized the first Methodist society ever formed in the United States, and preached the first sermon. This was in 1763; and he preached the first sermon ever preached in a Methodist church in the United States. This was in the church in John street, in New York. He assisted in building this church, and preached the dedication sermon, on the 30th day of October, 1768, declaring that the best dedication that a minister could make of a church was to preach a "faithful sermon" in it. His text on this occasion was Hosea x. 12. It is said that his preaching was generally very affecting, and that he often shed tears. He finished his course in humble obscurity, but in great peace. His grave reminds us of our early history.

Rev. Mr. Noble was a local preacher from Ireland; he was a very holy and zealous man of God, and was remarkable for pressing upon his hearers the necessity of being always ready to die. He had come that day from Warren county to visit his daughter and her family, who lived near Ashgrove. In the evening there was a meeting in the school-house near by, which he attended. He appeared to be in usual health, and in a very happy state of mind. He was addressing the people in a little pulpit which had been fitted up — whether preaching, or exhorting after some one else had preached, I do not recollect; but he was pressing his usual theme of *holiness*, telling the people they must always be ready to die at a moment's warning. And he remarked, that for years he had been constantly ready to die any moment

when the Master should call him. Just as he uttered these words, he paused and sat down, and appeared faint. His friends, perceiving that he was about to fall from his seat, hastened to him, but he spoke no more—he immediately expired. Yes, in a moment he exchanged the pulpit for a crown. While standing by his grave, I have often thought we should preach more impressively, if we knew that it would be the last time we should ever preach—if we expected that when we left the pulpit we should immediately go to the judgment seat of Christ. Under such circumstances, there would be no trifling calculated to excite mirth, and we should be more anxious to preach good sermons than great ones—“to win a sinner than to court a smile.”

Rev. D. Brown was appointed to travel on this circuit in 1803. He was said to be a man of deep and ardent piety, and of an excellent spirit, much devoted to the work of the ministry, and quite successful. I was told by a very reputable person, who was well acquainted with him, and, if I remember right, at whose house he died, that, on his way to attend the Conference which was held at Ashgrove, he fell in company with two other preachers, all of whom lodged at a friend’s house the night before they arrived at Ashgrove. In the morning they set off together on horseback. Brother Brown was riding between the other two brethren. Said Br. B., “Brethren, I dreamed a very singular dream last night; I wish you would interpret it.” One of them said, “Tell us your dream, brother, and we will interpret it.” So he related his dream. As nearly as I can recollect, it was as follows:—He thought he saw a ladder that reached from the earth to heaven: and that he was directed to ascend it. He did so; and, after climbing to an immense height, he thought he came to a transparent

canopy, which seemed to him as though it was perfectly solid, and that he was entirely alone and out of sight of the earth. He had been there but a few moments, when he thought the ladder began to shake as though it was about to fall; this threw him into inconceivable fear. Just at this moment, he thought a door was opened directly over him, and an angel's hand reached down and took hold of him, and gently drew him up. Immediately he found himself, as he supposed, in heaven; he seemed surrounded on every hand by the most astonishing glories, such as he had never formed any idea of before. Among the wonderful things which attracted his attention was an immense table, on which was a vast multitude of vessels of a most magnificent appearance; they were somewhat in the shape of vials, and of the purest white. Their lustre seemed to dazzle his sight. They appeared to be of various sizes; and in the centre was one that appeared larger than the others. When the angel that accompanied him observed that his attention was directed to this table, he said, "Those you see on this table are John Wesley and his preachers in connection with him." At this information, he thought he felt a thrill of joy at finding himself in company with those venerable men. And immediately he awoke.

After a little pause, one of the preachers said, "Well, brother, I will interpret your dream: you are going to attend Conference, and join Mr. Wesley and his associates in spreading scriptural holiness through the land." Said the other preacher, "Now, Brother Brown, I will interpret your dream: you will die before long, and go to heaven, and join the company of Mr. Wesley and his preachers there."

Brother Brown attended Conference, was appointed to travel Cambridge circuit, and died the September fol-

lowing, after fourteen days' sickness. The last words he uttered were, "My anchor is cast within the veil." No doubt the everlasting doors were lifted up to let him into heaven, and he has become united with Mr. Wesley and his preachers in the paradise of God.

Cambridge circuit was, at the time I travelled it, a very interesting field of labor. I was on it two years. The first year, I travelled with Rev. Friend Draper, and the second year Rev. Sherman Miner was my colleague. We labored in great harmony; Brother Miner was a man of a lovely spirit. But I fear the interests of the church were not much advanced during these two years.

There were at that time a great many Scotch people living within the bounds of this charge. These were generally staunch Calvinists; and in nearly every appointment there was great occasion to enlighten the people on the subject of doctrines; for Calvinism had exerted a deleterious influence. Predestination, the impossibility of falling from grace, and the necessity of living in sin, seemed to be the common sentiments of nearly all who professed religion, in some entire neighborhoods. In order to excite a little curiosity, and get the people out to hear, I occasionally preached on some very queer texts, which I would sometimes give out beforehand. In several places this was the only way we could succeed to get the people to hear us. If I gave out a singular text, or an uncommon subject, many would attend. So I would take my text sometimes from the "Confession of Faith"—"God hath for his own glory unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." And in some instances I would preach from home-made Scripture, such as, "No man can live without sin," "Whom he loveth he loveth to the end," "Judas was a devil from the beginning," &c. When I could by

any means get people's attention, it was not very difficult to make them see the inconsistencies of Calvinism, and the evil tendencies of some of its absurd dogmas. What can have a more evil tendency than to teach men that all the sins they ever committed were decreed eternally? How shall men be made to feel that they have done anything wrong, when they have done nothing only what God from all eternity decreed they should do? There is nothing in this doctrine calculated to induce men to serve God; but much to induce them to sin, and justify them in so doing.

Some may think the course I sometimes pursued, to get people's attention, was scarcely to be justified, but this, in many places, seemed the only way in which I could succeed. Curiosity with many is more powerful than the love of truth. It moved Zaccheus to leave his business, and *run* and *climb into a sycamore* tree to see Jesus, which nothing else could move him to do; and by this means he became acquainted with Jesus, and salvation came to his house. I had reason to believe that in some instances good results followed these eccentricities. I thereby got the attention of many on whose hearts I trust truth was made to bear.

This circuit, at the time I travelled it, embraced fourteen towns, having something over twenty regular appointments. These appointments we each visited every four weeks, always preaching three times every Sabbath, and frequently riding ten or twelve miles. Many excellent brethren lived within its bounds. Although most of the fathers of Methodism had departed to their rest, the spirit of Methodism still remained among their sons, and it remains until this day.

## NEW YORK STATION.

1819 — 1820.

*Associate colleagues. — Schism. — Unpleasant feelings. — Progress of Methodism.*

In the spring of 1819 I was stationed in the city of New York, where I found myself associated with the following brethren, all older than myself: A. Hunt, S. Merwin, L. Clark, and B. Hibbard. The second year they were A. Hunt, J. Soule, B. Hibbard, and E. Hebard. I now had an opportunity of profiting by the example and experience of older brethren. I received much benefit from their experience, especially in the administration of discipline. I was made to feel ashamed of many things I had done in this department of duty, especially the *manner* of doing them. I have ever since regarded it as a misfortune to our church, that there is so often a necessity of putting young men in charge, especially such young men as have not been careful students of our book discipline, and are indiscreet in managing church affairs.

The preachers belonging to this station usually met every week, to consult about matters relating to the church. On these occasions there were frequent discussions on doctrines, and manner of preaching, certain rules of discipline, and the proper way of administering them. These meetings and discussions were to me as the school of the prophets.

During the second year there was a schism took place in our churches. This was occasioned chiefly by the appointment of a board of stewards. Before this, the board of trustees had taken charge of all moneys collected in the congregation: and if the amount was not sufficient to pay the salaries of the preachers, and the current

expenses of the church, they would obtain a loan, and thus increase the church debt. In this way matters had gone on until the church had become burdened with an enormous debt, which was constantly accumulating.

Under these circumstances, it was the opinion of all the preachers, and most of the trustees, that this course was contrary to discipline, and ruinous to our church. It was, therefore, thought best to appoint stewards, according to discipline, to take the class collections and pay the preachers' support, and let the trustees have charge only of such property as belonged to the church. But this arrangement, although in perfect accordance with our discipline, met with strong opposition from several of the trustees. They contended that the laws of the State required trustees to have charge of all church property; and, therefore, they must receive the class collections and disburse them. But the others contended that the class collections were not church property, but the property of the ministers, raised especially for them, and, therefore, the trustees had nothing to do with them.

At that time all the societies of the city belonged to one charge, and all the churches were under the control of one board of trustees. Of course, all the official members met in one Quarterly Conference. After a long discussion, the Quarterly Conference decided in favor of a board of stewards being appointed, as the discipline requires. There was an overwhelming majority in favor of the measure.

In the course of this discussion it was remarked by some one, in reply to those who contended that the law required the trustees to have control over class collections, as well as all other moneys, that the general law under which the various religious societies were incor-

porated was not exactly suited to our economy ; and, therefore, it might be well to apply to the Legislature for a law which would recognize our peculiar economy. This remark was immediately seized on by some, and they set about making their brethren believe that the preachers were going to take measures to get all church property into their possession, and under their entire control ; and that, ultimately, they would take all the churches and parsonages away from the people, and convert them to their own use. These strange and unfounded insinuations produced considerable influence on many persons.

Immediately upon the appointment of a board of stewards, some of the trustees, who were class-leaders also, and several other leaders, withdrew from the church. In some instances, nearly all the members of their classes went with them, not because they felt any particular interest in the question at issue, but because they were much attached to their leaders.

Those who withdrew immediately organized themselves into an independent society, to be known by the name of "The Methodist Society." They erected a church and gathered a respectable congregation in Christie street. Mr. Samuel Stillwell, who had been a trustee, a man of considerable influence and wealth, became a principal man in this enterprise. It was probably through his means that his nephew, Rev. William Stillwell, a member of the New York Conference, was chosen to be their preacher ; and on this account they were called by many "*Stillwellites*."

This secession made us considerable trouble in New York for a while, inasmuch as it destroyed brotherly love to some extent. But I believe it was ultimately overruled for good, for it furnished a home for a class of uneasy spirits, who are sometimes found among us, of

whom the church are glad to be rid, as we can do them no good. But we lost several very valuable members by this schism. However, it was not long before many became convinced that they had been misled, and had erred in leaving us, and returned again to the church. In some instances the leaders and their entire classes came back together.

Mr. Stillwell remained a number of years in charge of his society and congregation, and in possession of the house in which they worshipped; but I believe he has made but little impression on the public mind. Mr. Stillwell and the few societies bearing his name, which were organized here and there, together with their preachers, have become merged with others. They are generally numbered among the things which are past. His society in New York has dwindled down to almost nothing, and he has become almost unknown. It has happened to them as it has usually happened to other societies seceding from our church composed of disaffected members. As far as I have observed, such have not generally prospered for any length of time. Those who have attempted to improve on our economy have usually made a failure.

Many have complained that our system gives the ministry too much power; they want a government which places ministers and members more upon an equality; something more *republican* in its character. But when they have tried the experiment they have not generally succeeded to their expectation, for want of energy in their system. When any church undertakes to hold the reins of government to the exclusion of the ministry, they are not in the order which God has established, and therefore cannot prosper.

After observing the workings of our ecclesiastical sys

tem for nearly half a century, I am firmly established in the opinion that our government is altogether preferable to any other. The better it is understood and its practical workings observed, the more it will be admired.

When I was stationed in New York, we had only six churches, viz.: John street, Duane, Forsyth, Allen, Bowery, and Greenwich. There were five stationed preachers, and we were assisted by the book agents and local preachers. We each preached but once in the same church on the same Sabbath, and once in five weeks, on a week evening, in the different churches.

Methodism has greatly increased in this city since those days. We now have in this city twenty-seven churches, several of which are very large, and we number nearly 8,000 members.

The two years which I spent in this city were to me very pleasantly and profitably spent. We had a gracious revival in the vicinity of John street church, and a considerable increase of membership. How far I was useful to the church I know not; but what I could not make out in preaching, I endeavored, in some measure, to make up in pastoral labors. In this way I trust I did some good. I disposed of a great many of our religious books among the people. However, on leaving this station, I felt, as I generally do on leaving any place where I have labored, that I had been an unprofitable servant.

## NEWBURGH STATION.

1821, 1822.

Infidel club. — Retributive providence. — Introduction of Methodism. — Kind friends.  
— Active brethren. — Remarks on donation visits.

Newburgh is a very pleasant village. At the time I was stationed here it contained between three and four thousand inhabitants. It lies on the west side of the Hudson, about sixty miles north of New York.

Formerly there was much infidelity in this place. Many embraced infidel principles, and were not ashamed of infidel practices. Some twenty years before I was stationed here, there had been an association organized, consisting of between thirty and forty persons, for the avowed purpose of destroying Christianity. They published a paper, which, if I recollect, was called the Temple of Reason; and they republished several infidel works, such as the writings of Tindal, Paine and Lackington.

This association was organized by a noted infidel, commonly called *Blind Palmer*. Many of its members believed it right to regulate their conduct as their propensities and appetites should dictate; and it is said that these principles were carried into practice by some associated with them.

They were not content with discussing the principles of Christianity, but they descended to the commission of acts which were impious and blasphemous. They appeared to take special pains to bring Christianity and its ordinances into contempt. Many things have been related of them, some of which may perhaps have been exaggerated; but I believe none doubted that, on a certain occasion, out of ridicule, they administered what they called the sacrament to a dog! If they have been misrepresented in other matters, it is an undoubted fact, that, after the Methodists commenced holding meetings in the place, the members of this infidel club were most violently opposed to us, and caused, by their personal opposition and influence, much disturbance in our religious meetings.

It is very remarkable that the triumph of these wicked men was very short. It is asserted that the man who acted as priest in administering the mock sacrament to the dog, died in about a week after, in a very awful

manner; and that several others, who were present on that occasion, died suddenly within a few weeks; three of them were drowned.

It is said that of those who composed this infidel club, *two* of them starved to death; *seven* were drowned; *eight* were shot; *five* committed suicide; *three* were killed by accidents; and that *seven* have died on the gallows. An intelligent gentleman, who has resided in this place since 1806, told me, in 1851, that he had been acquainted with nearly all the members of this association, and that he believed at least one fourth of them had committed *suicide*, either by drunkenness or dissipation, or by directly laying violent hands on themselves. He said one of their number went into a grocery in the village, and, in presence of several of his associates, loaded his gun, put the muzzle of it into his mouth, and, with his toe, pulled the trigger, and thus blew out his brains in their midst.

I have been credibly informed, by several persons who were acquainted with the circumstances attending those who have died a natural death, that, in every instance, their dying hour presented an unusually awful scene. The last words which some of them uttered were horribly profane.

And I have been told that all who belonged to this association are now dead, except one; and that only three of them have ever embraced religion, or given any evidence of repentance. It would seem that God had particularly marked these his enemies, who so wickedly reviled Christ. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

But, notwithstanding the scepticism which had been so early and so vehemently inculcated in this place, the rebukes which God in his providence gave its abettors,

greatly checked its influence. Religion had taken a firm hold on the better part of the community. There were, at the time I was stationed here, *five* churches in the place, and each supplied with a minister.

Among the first Methodist preachers who labored here, were Samuel Fowler, L. M'Coombs, Benj. Abbott, and Ezekiel Cooper. Brother Abbott preached here in 1789; and some time after this, Brother Cooper organized the first class in the place, and Elkanah Foster was the first class-leader. Some years after this, our people built them a little church. But for many years our society remained rather feeble.

In consequence of the inability of the society to raise my support in the regular and disciplinary way, the stewards resolved to make what they called a "Donation Visit," — what has since been generally called a "Donation Party." It was the *first*, and I may say the only one, I ever had in my whole life. About *one hundred* persons attended, and it resulted in my realizing about eighty dollars, in goods, provisions and cash. I felt very thankful for the friendship they manifested, and for the benefit which resulted; but I doubted, and still doubt, the expediency of raising the preacher's support, or any part of it, by such visits.

1. I think it is a difficult matter to have such a general gathering of professors and non-professors, without making it an occasion for a great deal of sport and nonsense, if not real sin. I have witnessed several such occasions since, when my heart has been much pained in observing what was transacted. I have known many preachers deeply afflicted that their house should be made a place of plays and vain amusements for young people. They felt that the dignity of the Christian min-

istry has been thereby really lowered, and religion disgraced by such transactions under their roof.

2. There is a great inconsistency in this mode of raising the preacher's support. It is called a *donation*, for which, of course, the preacher must thank his friends, when, in fact, it is but paying him what is justly his due, and for what he has toiled hard. We had better train our people to feel the obligation binding on them to support their preachers in a disciplinary way; and if they give him a donation, let it be a *donation* in fact, and given either out of sympathy on account of his wants, or out of respect to him on account of his diligence and faithfulness as a minister. And let the donation be given in a different manner from these "donation visits," — in a way not to injure his feelings, or make his family unnecessary trouble, or disgrace the cause of religion by being the occasion of sin. When donations are expressions of sympathy toward us in afflictions, or of especial good-will to us, a generous mind knows how to appreciate them, and the friendship and benevolence from which they flow.

3. These donation visits are calculated to prevent our stewards from raising the preachers' support in the regular way. Many of our friends, especially young people, are fond of all such parties, when fun and nonsense abound. In the absence of balls and theatrical amusements, such parties are very agreeable; they answer as substitutes. All such persons will withhold their means of support until they have this chance of public display and trifling frolic. A dollar donated on such an occasion will obtain half its value in food and the other half in fun. The latter will be considered very valuable; the more so for being enjoyed at the minister's house and under the sanction of the church.

4. Such donation visits often operate unjustly on some preachers; they will generally be made only to the *people's favorite*. His colleague may be the best man of the two, and most deserving; but, on this very account, perhaps the least popular, and fares the poorest. By this means, the one is puffed up with self-conceit, and the other sinks down into dejection and discouragement.

5. It operates generally to the injury of the cause of God and the prosperity of the church. When our stewards and brethren depart from the regular disciplinary way of collecting the support of our preachers,—making the support of the gospel no longer a matter of principle and of duty, but of mere caprice, depending on circumstances; when their liberality is permitted to depend on their particular opinion of the preacher they may happen to have,—they place our preachers under strong temptations to be so careful to please, that they may sometimes withhold the truth, and preach only very smooth things. Who among us will dare, under such circumstances, to preach the whole truth, and attack men's vices, when such a course may rob them of their bread? I think preachers ought not to be unnecessarily exposed to such temptations. It has hitherto been the glory of Methodism, that her ministers are bold and independent men, ready to do their duty regardless of consequences; and this is owing, in a great measure, to the peculiar excellence of our economy, and to this may be attributed, in a great measure, our unparalleled success.

6. This method of raising a preacher's support is calculated to defraud the presiding Elder. According to discipline, the presiding Elder is "to share with the preachers of his district in proportion to what they receive" as quarterage. Now, if the preachers should receive as quarterage only half of their allowance, the

presiding Elder would receive only in that proportion. Although the preachers might receive donations sufficient to make up all their claims, who knows it is so? What steward would feel at liberty to take a part of his preacher's *gratuities* and give it to the presiding Elder? What preacher would be willing to part with a portion of the *presents* given him, or what presiding Elder would consent to receive one half of his support from donations which had been made to other men?

During my two years in Newburgh I enjoyed more leisure for study and the improvement of my own mind than I had ever enjoyed in any place before. I have reason to believe that I had some fruit of my labor in this place. If there were not many converted, I think, however, that the church was somewhat built up, and established in truth and love. Since those days, the society in this place has greatly prospered; they have built a very commodious church in a central part of the village, and in May, 1851, found themselves able to entertain the New York Conference. I lately visited them, but found nearly every one of my former friends had gone to their rest. The names of Foster, Smith, Randall, Handy, and many others, I shall remember with pleasure while I live.

It is very pleasant, in visiting places where we have labored in former years, to find the children of our old friends walking in the footsteps of their pious parents. But it is painful to see, as we sometimes do, the children growing up wicked, or settled in life and having no other object in view than to become rich: inheriting their father's estate, and having forsaken their father's God, and forgotten their father's friends. There is but poor encouragement for parents to lay up property for such children.

## ALBANY STATION.

1828, 1824.

Important, but undesirable station. — A dream. — Some success. — Excellent brethren. — Rev. E. Vanderlip. — Division of the Church. — Separatists prospered. — A new Society organized. — Church burned. — Reorganized in Ferry street. — A Society organized in the west part. — Church in Division street sold. — New Church in Hudson street. — Arbor Hill Church. — Present state of Methodism. — Methodism the means of doing great good.

At the Conference held in the town of Malta, Saratoga county, 1823, I was appointed in Albany. This was a place of considerable importance. It was the seat of the State government, and it had been heretofore supplied with some of our strongest men. But not only did its importance render it an undesirable station to me, but the circumstance that within a few years past it had been rather unfortunate in two of its ministers, who had been stationed there, whose alleged conduct had dishonored religion, and upon that account it seemed to need special attention, and a man of more talents than I possessed. I am sure I never went to any place with so much reluctance as I went to Albany, fearing that I should somehow make a failure.

The night before I arrived with my family, I lodged at a friend's house and retired to rest very much afflicted in mind, with a sense of the greatness of my responsibility and my insufficiency. And I dreamed I was standing in the highway, in the town of Nassau, on the very spot where the Lord first blessed me with a sense of pardon. I thought I heard a horrid noise, somewhat like that of a whirlwind, carrying everything before it, approaching me. I could see nothing, but stood as one amazed, and cried out, "It is the devil." I thought that suddenly all was silent, but I saw the arms of a man approaching me, holding a large auger at my left breast,

and commence boring it into my heart. The auger was turned two or three times, when I seemed to hear the bones and sinews crack, and it gave me terrible pain. I cried out, "Lord, help!" Immediately the motion ceased; I cried again, and the auger began to unscrew, and my pain was much abated. I repeated the cry the third time, "Lord, help!" and all disappeared, and I awoke. The first thought that struck my mind was respecting my station, and the difficulties I might have there, and I immediately repeated the cry, "Lord, help!" I felt as though I had learned where to look for help in case I should get into trouble in Albany. Many times, during my labors in this station, when I had any difficulties, I thought of my dream, and repeated the cry, "Lord, help!"

At that time our people had only one church in the city; this was in Division street, which had been built about ten years. The first church we had in Albany was situated on North Pearl street, but having become too small, it was disposed of, and a larger one erected in Division street.

Our society numbered about three hundred members, and our congregation was generally quite large. I found the society in a very good state, for my predecessor, Rev. Phineas Rice, was a man of good talents, and an excellent disciplinarian and pastor. Many of the members were remarkable for deep and ardent piety. My predecessor did what it would be well if every preacher would do for his successor; he spent a few days and went around with me, and introduced me to some of the principal brethren and friends. It certainly gives a minister great advantage to become acquainted as soon as may be with the members and people to whom he preaches.

It is one of my failings, among many others, that I can-

not readily recollect names and countenances. I have no doubt, I have been sometimes thought to be stiff and unfriendly in my manner, when my seeming want of cordiality was owing to my not recognizing brethren when I have met with them. I have sometimes desired the brethren, in society meeting, when I first came among them, that if they met me in the street or elsewhere they would speak to me, and if I did not seem to know them, that they would introduce themselves by name, again and again, until I got so that I could recollect them. Our economy, embracing such frequent changes of ministers, has this disadvantage, that it keeps us comparatively strangers to many of our members, unless there be special pains taken to remedy it in this way.

I know not that I was ever associated with a body of official members, in any station, of whom I entertained a higher opinion, or with whom I operated more pleasantly, than with those in Albany. The names of many of them will long be remembered with much pleasure. I have outlived several of those dear brethren, but I hope to unite with them again in the church triumphant.

Rev. Elias Vanderlip, who admitted me into the church in 1803, was living here. He had been a travelling preacher formerly, but had located. He was a very pleasant and agreeable man. He possessed a good degree of religious feeling, had been very laborious and useful. I always loved him as a father. He lived to be eighty-four years old, and died September 3d, 1848. In his last sickness he enjoyed great peace of mind and triumphant joy. He used often to say to his friends, who called to see him, that he was "all packed up and waiting to go when the Master should call him."

While I was in this station we had a blessed work of

God among us, which resulted in quite an increase of members. We succeeded in diminishing to quite an extent a heavy church debt, with which the society had long been encumbered.

A few years after I was stationed here, the society got into some difficulty about renting the seats, which resulted in a division. There still remained a considerable amount of church debt, and a majority of the brethren thought it best to let the seats in order to raise means to clear off the debt; but some were opposed to it; they argued that the house had been built for a free house, and that many had contributed to its erection on that very account. They had assisted to build it for the reason that it was the only free church in the city, the only place where the poor could hear the gospel without any expense. They thought there ought to be one free church in such a place as Albany.

These brethren certainly reasoned with propriety, at least in this case, in favor of free seats; for it does seem unreasonable that men who had given their money for the purpose of building a free house could not have their wishes carried out, but that the seats should now be let, contrary to their wishes, and that, too, by men, many of whom were not among the original contributors. But the majority were in favor of letting the seats, so this measure prevailed. Quite a number immediately withdrew from the congregation, and after occupying a hall in the north part of the city for some time, they purchased a large building on North Pearl street, formerly used as a circus, which they fitted up and made a large and very convenient place of worship. This place has ever since gone by the name of Garretson station, in honor of the venerable Freeborn Garretson. Being situated in an excellent location, they soon gathered a large

and respectable congregation. This society has been greatly prospered, and has exerted an excellent influence. They have been blessed with many excellent brethren to take the lead in their affairs, and some able and excellent ministers for their pastors. For a while there were considerable unpleasant feelings, but they have long since subsided.

A few years after this division took place, as the city increased in population, a few brethren united to open a place of worship in the lower part of the city, and a preacher was sent there from Conference. For a while they hired a place; at length they built a very neat little church, but not long after, it was consumed by fire. After this they disbanded, and united with the other societies, until another rally was made, a society was again organized, and, by means of a few enterprising brethren, a neat church and parsonage have been erected on Ferry street. This society is at present in quite a prosperous state, and is doing great good.

About the same time a society was organized in the west part of the city, and a small church was purchased and occupied for several years, when they built a very good and convenient house on Washington street. The building of this house I regard as quite important, but I shall defer saying much about this matter until I come to give some account of my labors in that station.

Our brethren who occupied the old church in Division street, finding they had not sufficient room to accommodate the congregation, concluded to build a new church. This they completed in 1844. It is situated not far from the old one. It is quite an elegant building, facing two streets, Hudson and Plain.

During the year 1844 our preachers commenced regular preaching on Arbor Hill, in the north part of the city,

since which they have organized a society there, and put them up a very convenient church, and prospects are now very fair for doing great good in that part of the city. This enterprise shows what can be done when there are a few real enterprising men to go ahead, and know how to manage pecuniary matters.

Methodism has been very successful in Albany. They have now five churches, and number eight hundred and eighty members. Besides these a great number have been converted among us who have joined other churches; many have removed to other places, and many have died in the Lord, and gone to their heavenly rest. I have no doubt several thousands have been converted among us in this city who will reach their heavenly home.

The two years which I spent in Albany, were, on the whole, very pleasantly spent. I have some reason to believe my labors were not unprofitable to the church. There are but few now living here who were then members. I sometimes feel somewhat melancholy when I visit this city, where I see only here and there a person whom I knew in those days. But although the fathers and mothers are gone, many of their children are here to fill their places in the house of God.

## HARTFORD STATION.

1825, 1826.

Introduction of Methodism. — The good deacon. — A church built. — A rich brother. — A popular preacher. — An unpleasant beginning. — Preach at Windsor. — Trouble increases. — The rich brother withdraws. — Popular preacher removes. — Enemy defeated. — Church prospers. — A man of influence converted.

I was stationed in the city of Hartford, at the Conference held in Troy, 1825. Hartford is one of the capitals of the State of Connecticut. It lies on the west

bank of Connecticut river, about fifty miles from its mouth, and ninety-three miles south-east from Albany. At that time it contained about eight thousand inhabitants. The Congregationalists have always had the greatest influence here of any other denomination, and of all others put together. Until quite lately the place seemed inaccessible to Methodism. The people knew about enough concerning it, to know that its adherents were very zealous people, professing to be very religious; and this was enough to excite in many minds a great prejudice, for it was so different from the old-fashioned way to which they had always been accustomed; and, upon this account, it was the subject of ridicule with the vulgar. Some six or eight miles from the city, on the east side of the river, where was a small Methodist society, there lived a very good old brother who used to bring in fruit and vegetables to sell. He was known to be a Methodist, and the boys would frequently gather around him to make themselves a little sport. Very frequently they would sing out, "Hallelujah! Glory to God, Old Father Spencer!" The old gentleman would pay but little attention to them. He knew where they must have learned to treat him with rudeness — their parents were most to be blamed. Sometimes he would speak to them very kindly, and say, "Well, children, you have got the words pretty near right, but somehow it does not sound quite right — you ought to give glory to God, but you ought not to do it in sport."

Until some time in 1820, I think, there was no Methodist society in Hartford. There had been Methodist preaching now and then, and one or two families who called themselves Methodists and entertained the preachers when they called upon them. During this year, Mr. J. N. Maffit got into the court-house, and succeeded

in getting quite a congregation, and was the means of a good revival. Shortly after this a society was organized, and regular preaching established. For some time we had no other place for public worship than the court-house; and we had many prejudices to contend with. These prejudices were not confined to the wicked and the careless part of community, but were found among the religious. The Congregationalists had long had the ascendancy, and were rather jealous of any intrusions. Although they generally believed what is taught in their *Articles of Faith*, that God had eternally and unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass; yet when they saw that it was likely to come to pass that Methodism would be introduced there and get a permanent footing, a society formed, and a church built in their midst, many of them were in great trouble; they found it very difficult to submit to God's decrees. They could submit to have Sabbath-breaking, profaneness, and drunkenness abound, but this Methodism was a bad concern. The reason of this was, they did not properly understand its character, nor perceive what would be its salutary tendency.

Our society shortly numbered about *a hundred* members, but they were most of them rather poor. Indeed, only one man among them all could be said to be rich. It so happened that among our warmest friends was Deacon Beckwith, a most excellent man, and deacon of Dr. Hawes' church. The deacon attended Methodist meetings, and got wonderfully baptized by the Holy Spirit, and was much taken up with our doctrines and manner of preaching. He became much attached to our preachers and members, and at length a constant attendant at our meetings, and felt a great interest in our pros-

perity and success. He remarked one day to a friend, that his father was a very wise and good man in his day, and that he used often to tell him, if he wanted to do any good in the world, he must be sure to do something which was the most unpopular ; and he said he could think of nothing which would be more unpopular than to build a Methodist church in Hartford ; he believed, therefore, he should undertake it. He was as good as his word ; he united with our society, and set about this unpopular enterprise.

Deacon Beckwith had been the city collector for several years, was well known by all the citizens, and he knew them all, and his character for honesty and integrity gave him great influence among them. He did not possess much property, but he was very ingenious, and could turn his hand to almost anything he pleased. Beside obtaining quite an amount of subscription, procuring materials, and superintending the whole matter, he laid off his coat and wrought with his hands like a day-laborer. He was generally the first man on the spot in the morning and the last who was seen there at night. It was recorded on the records of the trustees that he labored in carrying up the building more than one hundred days. And for all this service he received no remuneration, only the satisfaction of seeing his enterprise succeed. The enterprise did succeed, as might well be expected when in such hands ; and, by the blessing of God, a good-sized, well-built brick church and parsonage soon made their appearance in the city of Hartford, and the prospects appeared very flattering.

A society gathered principally in a time of special revival, and by a man more remarkable for calling attention to the subject of religion than for anything else, needed the care of a pastor well qualified to regulate

matters and administer wholesome discipline. In view of this, Rev. Lewis Pease had been appointed there, and labored there with great acceptance and usefulness among the people for two years. He was my immediate predecessor.

Our rich brother, to whom I have alluded, was a farmer; he lived a little distance out of the city. He had entered with all his soul into the enterprise, and contributed more money than any other man. He had probably given more than all the members in the place, for I suppose he possessed more property than all. But not being well informed respecting our peculiar economy, it seems that he calculated that, in return for his liberality, he would be entitled to control the affairs of the church to a great extent. Owing to his former habit of thinking, his views were rather Congregational than Methodistic. He thought the people had a right to a greater share of influence in the appointment of a preacher among them than was consistent with our system of itinerancy. He thought the people had a perfect right to choose their preacher, and it was the Bishop's duty to appoint him whom they might choose. But everybody must see, who reflects on the subject a moment, that this will not work at all among us; because the same preacher might be the man chosen by half-a-dozen societies at the same time, and of course it would be impossible for more than one of them to be gratified. A system of itinerancy must have an appointing power, and this power must be in a measure independent; the man who holds it may listen to representations, and may and ought to take counsel of the presiding Elders of the respective districts; but he must be uncontrolled except by his own sense of duty and the general good.

It so happened that a brother, who had once belonged

to the travelling connection, but on account of ill health had located, visited this place and preached a few times during the previous year. He was a man of somewhat popular talents and of winning address. With this local preacher our rich brother was much delighted, and took a notion that the Bishop could send no man like him. Accordingly, while Brother Pease was absent attending Conference, he made an arrangement with this local preacher to become their pastor. Being one of the trustees, and also a steward, he felt himself authorized to let this brother occupy the parsonage for a residence for his family, and the lecture-room in the basement of the church for a boarding-school. All this arrangement was made without the consent of either trustees or stewards, and against it the society dared not to object. He no doubt thought he was really promoting the best interests of the church.

This was the state of things when I was appointed to labor in Hartford. I had not the least knowledge of any of these circumstances until just before I arrived at the place. I lodged, together with my family, the night before I arrived, with a brother, who informed me that I was destined to have trouble, and would need much wisdom and grace to manage matters so as to save the society.

When I arrived, I inquired for the Methodist parsonage, and, on driving up in front of it, lo! the reverend gentleman who had taken possession of it stood in the door, and, after the usual salutations, he informed me that arrangements had been made for him to occupy the parsonage, and that it was expected that I and my family should take lodgings at a certain boarding-house. So I bade him a good-day and sought another home. After being here a few days, the first man who called to

see me was our rich brother, who it seems had heard of my arrival. He drove up to the door of the house where I lodged and called. I saw him sitting in his wagon, and went out to see him. After introducing himself to me by name, he informed me he was one of the stewards; and then said, "Spicer, where are you going to live?" I replied that I did not know; that I presumed some place would be provided; that I had written to the presiding Elder on the subject. "Why, good God," said he, "we have got preachers enough now; we don't want you here." I replied, that I was sent there by the proper authorities of the church. "Well," said he, "you had better go to Windsor; we don't want you here; we are well satisfied with the preacher we have; he is a good preacher, and you are not going to turn him out of the parsonage; if you do, I will not contribute one cent toward your support, and I have been in the habit of giving about sixty dollars a year; if you stay, I will support him and nobody else." "Well," I said, "we will see what is best when the presiding Elder arrives and calls a quarterly Conference." So we parted, he with a ruffled temper, and I with a sorrowful heart.

In a few days after this, we had a quarterly Conference, and it was decided that the local preacher should preach here every Sabbath evening, and that I should preach morning and afternoon, and at Windsor, four miles distant, in the evening, and that I should occupy the parsonage. When my reverend brother was informed of this decision, he said, as he was employed by the presiding Elder to preach in the evening, he was as much entitled to the use of the parsonage as I was; and he should expect the steward to find him another house before he left this.

In the mean time, I searched every part of the city to find a house for myself, but could not. My youngest child was taken quite unwell, to add to our affliction and try my faith, and a trial it was, for we had only a bedroom at our boarding-house, which made our condition rather uncomfortable, although the family where we lodged was a very pleasant family and did all they could to accommodate us.

Under these circumstances I knew not what to do. I called again at the parsonage, and told my reverend brother my afflicted situation, and asked him to spare us one of the rooms in the upper part of the house until different arrangements could be made. He replied that he had no rooms to spare; that he had a number of boarders, and needed all the rooms he had. I then addressed his wife, who was a most excellent woman. I appealed to her sympathies, telling her how much my wife's feelings were afflicted; and here I had better success. She soon persuaded her husband to consent that I might occupy an upper room.

The next day we removed to the parsonage, and the good sister had done more than she had promised; she had cleared two rooms for our accommodation. My wife and I concluded to make ourselves contented with our situation, and as pleasant to our neighbors as we could, thinking we could endure our difficulties as long as they could theirs. We had gotten possession, and thought it would be best to hold on until forcibly dispossessed. Matters, however, remained in this situation only three weeks; our rich brother, perceiving how inconvenient was the situation of his favorite preacher, succeeded in obtaining a house for him, and he left us all alone.

Now the only way to get rid of me was by endeavor-

ing to throw me into the shade; so our good brother undertook to outreach me, and this he easily accomplished. But in addition to this, he assumed, to some extent, the charge of society affairs. Without saying a word to me, he formed the society into bands, and appointed band-leaders, and took the supervision of them himself; he changed the evening of prayer-meeting, and appointed a weekly lecture. For several weeks, matters went on very well, for I let him take his own course. He then called a meeting of the male members, and inquired what they designed to give him for his Sabbath evening services. The brethren agreed to give him the use of the lecture-room for his school. Finding that he was not gaining ground as fast as he supposed, in a few weeks after he desired me to inform the presiding Elder that he should not assist in supplying the appointment any longer. This I immediately did, and he immediately directed me to give up Windsor, and preach three times in future in this place.

On the next Sabbath, I gave notice that my reverend colleague had declined any further service in that place, and that I should supply the pulpit myself three times each Sabbath, in future. Now the battle was begun. The day following, our rich brother called to see me, and insisted that I had quite misunderstood my colleague's meaning;—that he would continue to preach, if the people wished him; but that he would no longer preach under the appointment of the presiding Elder, or in connection with me. He desired that next Sabbath I would appoint a meeting of the church and congregation, and let it be decided by a vote who should be their minister, he or I: he said he was very sure the people would vote for him, for he certainly was much the best preacher.

On the next Sabbath, I privately requested all the

official brethren, except our rich brother, to come into my study during the intermission. I then, for the first time, brought all the facts to their view, and told them the request of our rich brother. I informed them that if they wished such a meeting to be called, I would call it, and if the brethren saw fit to choose my reverend colleague to be their minister, instead of me, I had no objection. I would, in such case, leave them immediately, and take care of myself, and at the next Conference report that they did not wish the Bishop to send them a preacher. To this every brother present replied, "Not so." They said the proper authorities of the church had sent me to them, and they wanted no other man, and would have none other, unless he were regularly employed by the presiding Elder. They unanimously declared, that, so long as I would go according to the discipline of the church, they would sustain me. We then commended our cause to God in prayer, and separated.

As soon as our reverend brother perceived which way the current was running, he made arrangements to remove; and at the end of about four months from the time that I arrived at the place, he left us to ourselves. Shortly after this, our rich brother sent us a notice that he had withdrawn. On receiving this intelligence, no one wept.

But our trouble did not end here. Disappointed ambition had turned into malevolence. Our rich brother, being foiled in his plan to introduce Congregationalism, resolved to effect our ruin. He gave us notice that, if I were returned to them another year, he would prosecute the trustees, and recover all the money he had paid toward the expenses of the church. However, the official members, and many others, requested that I

should be returned; and, accordingly, I was appointed there again the ensuing year.

As soon as our old friend found I was sent back, he commenced a suit against the trustees, to recover \$920, which he said he had paid, and \$200 for services rendered in superintending matters while the house was being built. But, fortunately, the property had been regularly deeded to the M. E. Church, as the discipline directs, and in conformity to the statute law. And the trustees having been careful and correct in all their movements, we had nothing to fear. The records of their doings, and the conditions of all their subscriptions, clearly showed, that all who had contributed had totally alienated all they had given to build a house of public worship, on which they could have no claim, except the privilege of worshipping in it according to the usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And the records showed that it was not our rich brother who had superintended its erection, but the good deacon to whom we were under so many obligations.

When the suit was called before the county court, he thought proper to throw it into the superior court. Three eminent lawyers were engaged on both sides. But when his counsel came to understand all the facts in the case, they advised him to withdraw the suit. This he did, and paid the cost.

I was mercifully sustained in these trying circumstances, and the society prospered. Public sentiment was in our favor, and God was on our side. I was obliged to make some pecuniary sacrifice; the expense in supporting my family during the two years was about *two hundred dollars* more than I received from the society. But I never sacrificed anything more cheerfully. I verily believe the Lord has restored it to me since then *at least four-fold*.

During the two years of this warfare we made considerable improvement on the church and parsonage. Several hundred dollars were raised toward liquidating the debt; and, what was still better, we had a gracious revival of religion among us. One man of influence and wealth was converted, and united with us, which more than made up the loss of our rich brother who had left us.

This man for some time had been quite a constant hearer: he had been rather sceptical, but had been for some time much interested in our meetings. He was to me a kind of thermometer; when I perceived that I had interested him in my discourse, I always felt encouraged.

On the morning of the first of January, in my second year among them, when he awoke, a new train of thought was awakened. He recollects that he was just fifty years old that day, and that, during all the time he had lived on the earth, he had not taken one step toward securing his salvation. He resolved, before he arose from his bed, that he would now set out to live differently. He determined to begin by calling his family together before they ate their breakfast, and read to them a chapter in the Bible. But he thought, *When I have done this, what then shall I do?* Soon after he had arisen and dressed himself, his little daughter came in, to call him to breakfast. As he entered the room where the breakfast was prepared, he requested his eldest daughter to bring him the Bible. The daughter and all the family were surprised at this request, and thought, *What now?* what can all this mean? While the family were thinking, *What now?* he kept thinking, *What then?* He could hardly think of praying in his family. He began to read; and, as he approached the end of the chapter, the inquiry, *What then?* became so powerful

that his feelings overcame him, and he burst into tears, and laid down the Bible. His wife, who was a member of our church, said to him, "What is the matter?" "Oh!" said he, "I am a sinner." His voice was choked with grief, and he could say no more. The family were all melted into tears, and no breakfast was eaten that morning. A little messenger was sent to the parsonage. The lad said his father wished to see me at their house immediately, and I hastened to obey the summons, thinking as I went, *What now? what can all this mean?*

When I arrived, the family were all sitting in the parlor, in entire silence. All seemed as solemn as if attending a funeral. Mr. H. sat with his head bowed down, looking very sad, as though in great affliction: all appeared as if they had been weeping. I bade them good morning, and inquired what was the matter; whether he was sick. He burst into tears, and said, "My heart is sick; I am sick of sin." I replied, "If that is your difficulty, I know of a physician who can perfectly cure you." So I told him of Jesus, the good physician and the balm of Gilead. I told him of Christ's atoning sacrifice, and of his ability, willingness and readiness to save him. After conversing a while, we united in prayer. All the family were on their knees. Although he did not find comfort to his soul immediately, it was not many days before he was brought into liberty. The good Physician healed his wounded heart.

This man became a deeply pious man: he was tender-hearted and child-like. For several years he was a class-leader in the church, and exerted a blessed influence in society around him. After six or seven years he departed this life in great peace. His memory is very precious among his brethren, to this day.

I regard his conversion as a seal to my ministry in Hartford. Can any one wonder that I do not regret being stationed in that place, or that I took joyfully the spoiling of my goods? I saw my labors blessed of God, and the cause of Methodism triumph. This was enough to compensate me for all my trials and all my sacrifices. We have now (1851) in this place two churches and three hundred and twenty members.

## NEW HAVEN STATION.

1827, 1828.

Rev. Jesse Lee. — Introduction of Methodism. — The family of Gilberts blessed and made a blessing. — Great opposition. — Useful preachers. — Success of Methodism.

New Haven is a very pleasant city in Connecticut. It is situated at the head of a bay which opens four miles into the land from Long Island Sound. Its streets are wide, and their intersections are rectangular. It is the seat of Yale College, which was founded in 1700. The city contained, at the time I was stationed there, something over ten thousand inhabitants.

Methodism was first introduced into New Haven by Rev. Jesse Lee. He came into this place a stranger, and by some means obtained liberty to preach in the courthouse. The president of the college and many of the students came out to hear him. This was on Sunday, five o'clock, June 21, 1789. After preaching here a few times, a gentleman, by the name of Isaac Gilbert, Esq., went to hear him preach, and was so well pleased with his doctrine and manner of preaching, that he invited him to come home and lodge with him. Mr. Lee accepted the invitation, and, as he entered the door of Mr. Gilbert's house, he stopped and lifted up his hands, and, in a very solemn manner, said, "Peace be to this

house." Ever after this, Mr. G.'s house was a home for the Methodist preachers, and, truly, "peace" came to it. Mr. G. became the father of a numerous family, and prosperity has ever attended them, and a large part of them have become religious. Mr. G. was yet living when I was stationed there, and I found on the church record the names of no less than *twenty-seven* who were connected with his family; several of them belonged to the third generation. Of these, one has since become a travelling preacher.

The First Methodist society was formed in this city, by Rev. Daniel Ostrander, in 1795. After this, they had regular preaching once in two weeks, on week-day evenings. For several years the society remained quite small, and its members were most of them poor. In 1800, they obtained an old building formerly occupied by the Sandemanians, which answered for a place of worship for a while. After this they had preaching on Sabbath, once in two weeks.

Methodism, not being well understood in those days, was by many greatly despised. By many, its friends were looked upon as not worthy of any respect. Their doctrinal views gave offence to many of the religious, and their plain preaching gave offence to many of the vicious. Many of the latter seemed to think it no harm to disturb their meetings. Some wicked fellows of the baser sort threatened to pull down our house of worship, and actually commenced putting their threats into execution. Several of them got into the house one night, and commenced cutting down the pulpit and breaking the seats. But a few of our brethren, getting timely notice of their design, rushed in upon them, and, by means of such weapons as they could get hold of, they drove them out of the house. The civil authorities

interfered in our behalf, and we were afterwards protected from violence.

In 1807, a new church was erected on Temple street, but the society remained quite small; so that, in 1814, we numbered only about sixty members. But during the year 1821, there was a glorious work of God; and such was the increase of our church and congregation, that it was found necessary to build a larger church. This work was soon accomplished. It was erected in the north-west corner of the public square,—a brick building sixty-eight by eighty feet, having a basement. Methodism here, as elsewhere, has shown itself possessed of a vitality which can overpower all opposition.

When I came to this station, I found about two hundred and seventeen members, and the society in a very good state; for I had been preceded by Rev. Heman Bangs, a man somewhat remarkable for his skill in regulating church matters. Although I was not the man of their choice,—for they had their eyes fixed on Brother S. D. F.,—yet they received me very kindly, and had it not been for a difficulty which took place, in which I had to interfere in the administration of discipline, I should probably have spent my two years in this place very pleasantly, and perhaps somewhat usefully. As it was, I hope it will appear, in the coming day, that my services were not wholly lost, although I passed through some rather severe trials, in doing what I deemed to be my duty.

I have lived long enough to be pretty well convinced that a man's usefulness does not consist altogether in his being the means of the awakening and conversion of sinners. The church is to be built up in the truth, and order and discipline are to be promoted and carefully attended to. This course often lays the foundation for

future prosperity and permanency. If, in carrying up the ancient temple at Jerusalem, no other workmen had been employed than those who could dig the stone from the quarry, or procure the timber from Mount Libanus, it certainly would have been but a rough-looking building. It never would have been so famous for many ages for its beauty and strength. In the Christian ministry there are divers gifts, but all of the same spirit.

Methodism has greatly prospered since 1829, when I left them. It is said that the venerable Asbury, when once preaching in their little church in Temple street, and encouraging the little flock not to fear, said, "Brethren, you will by and by see a Methodist church going up here in this direction," — pointing toward the north-west corner of the public green, "and another in that direction," — pointing toward the east from where he then stood. Although it then seemed one of the most unlikely events which could be imagined, that our people would ever be permitted to occupy a place on the public square in the city of New Haven, yet, in a few years, behold, it came to pass. And that they would ever need a second church in this place had not entered any man's thought at that time. Even this event has taken place. In the eastern part of the city, where at that time there was scarcely a solitary house, the people are now thickly settled, and many splendid edifices have been erected; even there, too, is a public square, and on that square, a few years ago, another beautiful brick church was erected, in which our people worship God.

The first church, which was built on the square in the west part of the city has been disposed of, and a new and much larger and more beautiful one has been erected. It stands on the corner of Maine and College

streets, a little distance from where the former stood, and is said to have cost, including the ground, \$27,000. The Methodists in this place now exert their full share of influence with other denominations in doing good. We have many excellent members here. The number of members now (1851) in society in this place, amounts to eight hundred and ninety-five.

## CHAMPLAIN DISTRICT.

1829—1832.

Progress of Methodism. — Faithful and successful ministers. — Early prejudices conquered. — Others bestir themselves. — Imitate us. — Go to extremes in doctrine and in manner. — Protracted meeting. — Result. — Unconverted converts. — Influence of Methodism. — Parsonage burned. — Kindness of friends. — Middlebury. — Dreadful catastrophe.

At the Conference held in Troy, 1829, I was appointed presiding Elder, on what was then called Champlain District, afterwards Middlebury District. This district embraced a very interesting portion of country; it was mostly in the State of Vermont, extending from Lake Champlain to the foot of the Green Mountains. Brandon circuit, which I travelled in 1810, embraced then nearly all of what is now included in the district.

During the eighteen years since I travelled here, great change had taken place in regard to the state of Methodism. Then our societies were few and far between; now they are numerous. Then there was but *one* Methodist meeting-house in all the country embraced in this district; now there are *sixteen*. Then we held our meetings in barns, private rooms, and school-houses, generally, but now we have access to the meeting-houses of other denominations whenever we wish, and not unfrequently are requested to exchange with other ministers, and are sometimes invited to hold our quarterly meetings in their churches.

There has certainly a great change taken place, in the minds of the people generally, towards our preachers, and towards our doctrines. Although our preachers, who have travelled in these parts, have not made any great pretensions to literature or science, they have, nevertheless, been remarkably successful in their appropriate work, for they were generally well qualified for it. Their deep and ardent piety, their entire devotion to their work, their plain and practical preaching, and untiring diligence, have commended them to the people, and secured their confidence and affections. They brought new things to their ears; they preached a *free* and *full* salvation, a salvation provided for and offered to all; a salvation not only from the *guilt* of sin, but from the *dominion* and *love* of sin. Many had always been taught that the highest experience which a Christian could attain on earth, is that described in Romans vii.: *carnally-minded and sold under sin*. Many had all their life-time sat under Calvinistic preaching, and verily thought they could do nothing, and that nothing need to be done, to secure salvation. They supposed, if they were to be saved, they should be saved, and if they were to be lost, they could not avoid it. But our preachers proclaimed aloud, and with great earnestness, that Christ died for all, and that God commandeth all men everywhere to repent.

The doctrine of decrees, election, the impossibility of falling from grace, and the necessity of living in sin, had been preached until the spirit of slumber had fallen on nearly all the Congregational and Baptist churches, not only in these parts, but to a great extent in every part of New England. But Methodism had awakened new thoughts among the people, and a spirit of inquiry had gone forth. These peculiarities of Calvinism were not

relished as formerly. Such had been the success of Methodism that the ministers of other denominations were obliged to bestir themselves or lose their hold upon their people. What must be done? To renounce the peculiarities of Calvinism they would not consent; it had been the religion of their fathers, and it was interwoven into all their standard works. They must, as a substitute and a matter of policy, occasionally borrow our doctrines, and imitate our manner of preaching; they must borrow our tools, and invent some new ones of their own. Accordingly, there arose a class among the Presbyterians, called the "New School," and among the Congregationalists and Baptists, what were called "New Measures."

Among the most prominent revivalists of these denominations were Rev. Messrs. Nettleton, Finney, Burchard, Foot, Swan, and Knapp. Although these gentlemen never formally renounced the articles of faith belonging to their respective churches, they were often heard denouncing their phraseology in no measured terms. They were zealously engaged in endeavoring to increase the number of the elect, although their creed declared it could not be increased. They held protracted meetings all through those parts, and to quite an extent throughout New England. The phraseology they used on these occasions was wonderfully changed from what it was formerly. With them, a *new heart* meant nothing more than a *new purpose*; a change of heart was only a change of a man's *purpose*. Men's *natural ability* to serve and love God, and their *duty* to make themselves a new heart, was a very common theme; it entered more or less into all their preaching, and into all their exhortations and prayers. "Break your hearts," "submit, submit," was almost their constant theme in public

and private. Repentance and faith, forgiveness of sin, and the renewing influence of the Holy Ghost, made very little, and, in many instances, no part whatever, of their public instruction or Christian experience. According to their views, divine influence was not necessary to *enable* men to submit ; it was necessary only to make them *willing* to submit.

I attended one of these protracted meetings, in the town of Charlotte, in the spring of 1831, where several of these new measure revivalists were present, among whom was the celebrated Mr. Foot. They received me with much cordiality, and invited me to preach, and an excellent spirit prevailed among them. There were, if I recollect, about fifty converts reported as the result of this meeting. But I am very sorry to be obliged to say, that, during this whole meeting, there was no distinct allusion made, by any of these ministers, to the atonement of Christ, repentance, faith in Christ, pardon of sin ; or even the necessity of divine influence, except so far as such influence was necessary to make a man willing to submit. The principal burden of all their preaching and prayers, observations and remarks, was the holiness of God's law, the sinfulness of sin and its offensiveness to God, the certainty of future punishment, and the dreadful condition of the damned. When these topics had been discussed, and Universalism thoroughly exposed, — and in many instances this was most ably done, — then, how to escape the wrath to come was pointed out, which always consisted in *submitting to God*, and making ourselves new hearts.

On the last day of this extraordinary meeting, to which I allude, an invitation was given to all who were willing to submit, to come out and stand in the broad aisle, which led from the door up to the pulpit. There was, in a mo-

ment, a general rush from all parts of the house, and the aisle was nearly filled. After a brief exhortation had been given by a minister standing in front of the pulpit, the pastor of the church started towards the door, and as he passed down he addressed each one, first on his right hand and then on his left, and, putting his lips close to their ear, exhorted them to submit. When he had passed them all, he turned around and said, "Now, all of you who have submitted, follow me." So he walked up the aisle to the front of the pulpit, and several fell in train, and followed him up. These were extended along in front of the pulpit, on the right and left, and by the minister pronounced hopefully converted.

I sat and watched this operation with astonishment and distress. I could not discover a sign of a tear in any eye, nor anything that indicated deep feeling in their hearts; and I could not but really fear that there was not a real convert, nor even a true penitent, among them all. In my hearing they certainly had received no proper instruction concerning the way of salvation as it is revealed in the Scriptures. The next day I called upon the pastor, in company with one of our preachers, and told him all that was in my heart;—that I doubted whether any person had been truly converted during the meeting; that I feared they had deceived the people and led them astray.

I recollect an instance where one of the converts of these new measures, and it was one who was among the clearest cases, was questioned respecting his conversion. One of our brethren asked him what was the greatest evidence he had that he had been converted; he replied, "I hope I have some desire to serve God." Such a Christian must be in rather a comfortless state; he does not know that God loves him, or that he loves God.

Nor does he know certainly that he has even a desire to serve him ; he only hopes he has. But what better can be expected from "New Measures," adopted for the conversion of sinners, measures unknown to the apostolic church, and unauthorized of God's word ? Christians manufactured by revivalists, or who have made themselves new hearts instead of being "renewed by the Holy Ghost," must be rather comfortless.

These new measures made sad work in some of the New England churches ; they introduced many members who really knew nothing about the experience of true religion. A great reaction has followed, and a withering dearth has been the result. Since then, however, the people have come to their senses on this subject, and a much better state of things exists in the Congregational and Baptist churches.

Methodism has certainly exerted a very salutary influence in New England and elsewhere. It occupies a middle ground between Calvinism and Universalism, and between old-fashioned Calvinism and new-vamped Pelagianism. Although our Calvinist brethren have not changed their doctrinal system, as published in their creed and standard authors, yet in some respects their preaching is more evangelical and in accordance with God's word. As far as the people generally can perceive, their doctrines resemble Methodism ; but there is yet a great difference.

On the 30th day of October, 1830, an event took place which threw my family into considerable affliction. Our district parsonage, where we resided in the town of Charlotte, took fire, and was consumed, together with the barn and wood-shed. By this occurrence we lost all our furniture and clothing ; and all my books and papers

were destroyed. My family narrowly escaped with their lives, thanks to a merciful Providence.

This destruction of our home and property was a great affliction ; but it is due to our brethren and neighbors to say that they were exceedingly kind. A gentleman of the Congregational church let us occupy a part of his house the remainder of the year, although it was a great inconvenience to his family. All our wants were promptly supplied, for all classes of community contributed to our relief. A considerable portion of our loss was ultimately made up, chiefly within the bounds of the district. The kindness of our friends has made a deep impression on my mind.

After about two years we succeeded in repairing the loss of our district parsonage, by the purchase of a house and lot in the village of West Poultney, which place is now the seat of the Troy Conference Academy.

In consequence of losing our parsonage, I removed to Middlebury in April following, where I resided two years. Methodism was introduced here somewhere about the year 1800, and we have had a very good society ever since.

A few months before I came to reside here, a dreadful catastrophe took place, about one mile north of the village, in a place called Beaman's Hollow. Here were several mills, and quite a number of families living. The people lived on both sides of the falls of a considerable stream, which emptied into Otter Creek. One day, just at evening, a heavy rain commenced falling, and the stream became so swollen that several dams, which were above this place, gave way, and the flood carried everything before it for several miles. About *midnight*, when the darkness was terrible, and the rain was pouring down in torrents, the flood came rushing on to this

little village, when most of its inhabitants were wrapt in slumbers. It swept dams, bridges, mills, houses, and everything in its way. It came so suddenly and unexpectedly, that many persons were carried off by its force before they could get out of its reach. Some of these saved their lives by laying hold on floating timbers; others by seizing the limbs of small trees, through whose tops they were carried. To these they held fast until the waters were abated. But no less than *fourteen* persons, young and old, perished in the waters. Some of those who were lost were among the most excellent members of our church. I believe some of the bodies were never recovered.

Among those who perished was a very gay young lady. A few days previous to her death she was in company with some of her Christian friends, who attempted to converse with her concerning the salvation of her soul. But such was her pride and carelessness about religion, that she abruptly left the room, saying, "I can't bear these Methodists, for they are always talking to me about getting religion." As she floated by on some drift-wood, she was recognized by her friends, who stood on the bank of the stream where she passed, but unable to afford her any help. Her cries to God for mercy were heard above the wailing of the wind, and noise of the rushing flood. She perished; but, perhaps, her prayer for mercy was graciously heard. There were connected with this dreadful catastrophe several scenes of distress, which utterly defy an adequate description.

## REFORMERS.

A few years before I was appointed to this district, there was an effort made by several local preachers to effect a reformation in our church government. This effort was in connection with an organization which had been formed at Baltimore a few years previous. At that time, the discipline provided for a local preachers' conference in each district; and the brethren of that class in this district, at least many of them, took it into their heads to let their importance be felt. One year they refused to recommend any to the travelling connection. A number of local preachers withdrew, forming themselves, and such as chose to associate with them, into a separate organization, by the name of "Reformers." After a while, they, with their brethren at Baltimore, took upon them the title of "Protestant Methodists."

A few of our brethren who had been travelling preachers, and had located, united with this organization; but most of them were local preachers who had never travelled. Nearly all were men of considerable talent and standing among us. Among them, were D. Bromley, J. Byington, L. Chamberlin, &c. The difficulty seemed to be this: those brethren who had left the itinerant work were not willing to take their appropriate place as local preachers, while the travelling preachers, many of whom were but young men, and, in their estimation, of inferior talents to themselves, had the pastoral charge of the work. If the preachers would not submit to their dictation, they thought they had reason to complain, and, in some instances, they justified themselves even in railing against their brethren. This state of things could not long continue; some were expelled, and some fore-saw the evil and withdrew.

But the organization which they formed did not prosper to any great extent. A contention among themselves soon divided them into two parts. Although they formed circuits, and attempted to organize a travelling connection; and for a while did their best to build themselves up, by disaffected our members in order to proselyte them to their party, they did not succeed.

I found a few of them in some parts of my district. Some of the preachers I had known in former years, when I travelled here; but how changed in spirit! They had become not only disaffected toward our church government, but many of them had become strongly prejudiced against our preachers. In their estimation, our government was the veriest system of tyranny, and all our preachers a company of tyrants.

During my first year on the district, Rev. J. M. paid us a visit. He had been a travelling minister among us, and labored all through this country formerly with great success, but had located, and removed to the west. Although he had not joined the Reformers, he had embraced their views in many things, and came into these parts, no doubt, to see what influence he could exert in that direction. He came into Starksborough, where there was a society of Reformers, and gave out an appointment to preach, promising to preach in favor of reform. But it happened that Bishop Hedding came into the place, and Mr. M. could not do otherwise than ask him to preach in the morning. The Bishop, being well aware of Mr. M.'s design, took for his text, "As ye receive Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." So he went on to tell, among other things, how he received Methodism in his younger days, and that he received it through the instrumentality of Mr. M. He remarked, that Br. M. taught him so and so, and, turning to him,

said, "Did you not, Brother M.?" Nearly all his discourse was a vindication of Methodism; and he constantly appealed to Mr. M. for the truth of his assertions. This discourse completely disconcerted the good old Brother M., so that he made out but little in attempting to preach in the Bishop's presence in the afternoon. His influence was completely nullified in this place; and he went away without effecting anything. This organization, formed with so much hope by our disaffected brethren, is at present, in all this part of the country, in a very feeble state. They are doing very little, and have very few societies in existence.

## MORMONS.

1833.

While I was in this district, the Mormons, so called, made their first appearance in these parts. It was pretended by Joseph Smith,—a man who lived in the State of New York,—that he had miraculously discovered several golden plates in Palmyra, near where he lived, which he dug from the earth. On these, he pretended, there were wonderful inscriptions, containing the history of a very ancient people, who once inhabited this country, and raised those artificial mounds which abound in some of the Western States. These records he pretended to have translated and published in a book called the "Book of Mormon," which is considered as the Mormon Bible.

But it has been since ascertained that this book was written, at least a considerable part of it, by a Mr. Spalding, as a matter of amusement for himself and his friends. It was an attempt to account for the origin of the western mounds, in which he drew all the materials from his own imagination. He designed to publish this, but

never did. This manuscript somehow found its way into the hands of Joseph Smith and his associates, and was at first published merely as a catch-penny. But Smith availed himself of it to turn it to some account in getting up a new religious association.

Some of the preachers of this strange whim found their way within the bounds of my district, and gained some attention. They professed to heal the sick and to raise the dead. In one instance, they imposed on a family, and attempted to heal an elderly lady, a member of our church. The preacher baptized her, and, after praying and a great deal of ceremony, until her feelings were wonderfully wrought up, he commanded her to rise up and walk. She immediately sprang upon her feet, clapping her hands and exclaiming, "Glory to God! I am healed!" But her rejoicing was short; she could not walk; she fell to the floor, and had not strength to rise. But this was enough to make a story of; and it was published all abroad as a miracle, without telling the whole of it. However, the facts in the case were shortly published, over the proper signature of the lady and some of her friends.

They made such a noise about this book of Mormon, especially the golden plates from which it was said to have been translated, that a number of gentlemen residing in Essex county, N. Y., addressed a letter to the post-master who lived near where it was pretended the golden plates were found. The reply was signed by *eight* of the most respectable gentlemen in the place. They declared that the story about the plates was considered, by all persons of good sense in that place, as wholly unworthy of notice; that if any person there should for a moment believe the story, he would be laughed at for his credulity; that Smith's followers were

mostly confined to the most ignorant and worthless part of community ; that Smith and his friends had for some time been searching with mineral-rods for hidden treasures. They concluded by saying, that such is the character of Smith and his associates, their want of veracity and common honesty,—such their idleness and neglect of paying their debts, that there is but little evidence that they are the chosen and inspired instruments by whom God would make any new revelation to man.

I attended one of their meetings, held in the west part of Castleton, Vt. There were two of their preachers present, and both addressed us at some length. The first spoke about an hour ; he was a man of some talents, and displayed some ingenuity, and quite a familiarity with the Scriptures. He had formerly been a Baptist. His discourse was concerning the different dispensations. We had the dispensation of Adam in paradise, of Noah, of the patriarchs, of the prophets, of John the Baptist, of Christ, and of the apostles. Each of these, he said, succeeded the other, and each was brighter as it advanced along in the track of time. These had all passed away ; but the prophets and apostles had predicted a brighter and more glorious dispensation to come. Here he quoted largely from the Old and New Testaments such passages as refer to the final triumph of Christianity. These all, he said, refer to Mormonism, or the " Latter Day Saints." " Truth shall spring out of the ground ;" — this, he said, alluded to the golden plates so mysteriously obtained. The two rods, described in Ezekiel xxxvii. 16—29, which were to become one in the hand of the prophet, he said, were the Bible and the Book of Mormon ; the latter was a supplement to the former, to make it perfect ; one was the Jewish Bible, and the other was the Bible for the Gentiles. The



latter day had come, the heavenly kingdom had commenced, and the millennial glory had begun.

After he sat down, the other arose, and entertained us about half an hour, making very strong assertions, and warning us at our peril not to reject Mormonism. He said they knew what they asserted to be true; that many angels had appeared, and had confirmed the truth of Mormonism. They had heard these angels with their own ears, and seen them with their own eyes; and knew they were from heaven and spoke the truth; and God would soon destroy all the wicked from the earth, if they did not embrace the truth.

To these strange assertions, fallacious reasonings, and terrible denunciations, I listened with becoming attention; but none of them moved me to either faith or fear. As to the angels who had announced the truth of Mormonism, hearing and seeing would not have quite convinced me. I thought I should want to examine them a little, and see if I could not *feel* them, and ascertain if they had not flesh and bones; or, if I found they were real spirits, I should like to have questioned them a little, whether they were really from heaven, and how long since they left there, and whether they had not been expelled from heaven. And I think, before I could have believed they were really good angels, after hearing them testify to such nonsense, I should have *smelled* of them, to be sure they had not come from heaven by the way of hell; for I should have greatly doubted their veracity. But, notwithstanding the ridiculous pretensions of these people, they made some converts from among a certain class in those parts, and since then have made many more in other parts of our country. There is scarce anything too absurd to find more or less adherents.

## LANSINGBURGH AND WATERFORD.

1833.

History of Methodism. — Rev. J. Ketchum. — E. Chichester. — C. Carpenter. — Election sermon.

I was appointed to this station in 1833, and Rev. W. D. Stead was associated with me. Lansingburgh and Waterford are two beautiful villages, lying on opposite sides of Hudson River, a few miles above Troy. Waterford is on the west side of the river, and is a very pleasant place. The first Methodist church built in this place was erected principally by means of Rev. Joel Ketchum and Mr. James Barber.

Brother Ketchum had been a travelling preacher; he joined the travelling connection in 1793, and labored several years with great success. But finding his family increasing and the means of supporting them so small,—for they were, indeed, very small in those days,—he thought best to locate and go into the mercantile business. He was very useful to the church, but did not succeed very well in business. I recollect he once said to me, "I advise you never to locate to get rich;" and added, that he had made at least \$20,000 in his business, but he believed that he should die a poor man.

Brother K. did quite an extensive business for several years in Waterford, and afterward in Lansingburgh, and was very much respected by all who knew him. He was one day telling Brother L. C. a dream he had the night before. He said he dreamed he had an appointment in their little church in that place to preach, and just as the people were gathering, there arrived at his store two loads of wheat. He thought, notwithstanding it was time to commence his meeting, he would weigh the grain and secure it in his store before he went to the church. He did so, but when he came to the church,

the people had become tired of waiting and had gone home. He returned to his store feeling very bad and much condemned. But when he went to examine his bin of grain, behold, the rats had gnawed holes through its bottom, and all his grain had run out and fallen into the river! On hearing this dream, his wife exclaimed, "Ah! Mr. Ketchum, that is just what I fear will happen, if you don't go and do your duty; I expect you will lose your congregation and all your property too." His fears and hers, so far as worldly property was concerned, were realized; for, after all his endeavors to accumulate something for old age, he did not succeed. Probably he would have succeeded just as well in getting his family through, if he had continued in the regular work. However, few local preachers are more useful than was this dear brother.

The little church in Waterford was disposed of, after a few years, and a larger one has been erected. The avails of the first church were appropriated toward erecting one at Lansingburgh.

Lansingburgh is on the east side of the Hudson, about three miles above Troy. At present it contains about five thousand inhabitants, and is certainly one of the most beautiful villages found on the Hudson. The first Methodist society in this place was formed by Rev. Samuel Howe, in 1803. I recollect of hearing Rev. Laban Clark say, that, in 1803, he and Martin Ruter preached here, and that, under the first sermon he preached here, a young man who was teaching school in the place was awakened. This was Chandler Lambert, who afterward became a travelling preacher. Mr. Ruter was at that time only eighteen years old. On account of his youth, he was invited to preach in Dr. Blatchford's church, which was well filled.

The First Methodist church was erected in this place about the year 1810, for which our people were much indebted to Rev. Messrs. J. Ketchum and E. Chichester, who then resided here. These brethren not only gave their money, but bestowed much labor with their own hands. After about twenty years, this house was found too small for the society, and was therefore disposed of and a new one erected on Congress street.

Among those who have done much to sustain Methodism in this place, Rev. E. Chichester deserves to be mentioned. Brother C. was formerly a travelling preacher. He joined the travelling connection in 1799, and located in 1807. Since his location, he has not been a sabbatical hireling, but he has labored abundantly without any expense to the church. In abundant labor I have never known him equalled by any local preacher, and as a man of integrity I know not his superior. For the promotion of Methodism in this place he has labored long and faithfully, and his memory will long be cherished here. He may be called a travelling local preacher.

The M. E. church has gained quite a respectable standing in this village, and is at present exerting an excellent influence on the community. I believe our society is at this time as strong as any society in town.

In 1849, they erected a new church in a central part of the village, which is rather superior to any other in the place. Our church members number two hundred and twenty-one, and we have had for several years quite a flourishing Sabbath school.

When I was stationed at this place, Lansingburgh and Waterford were united in one charge. My colleague and I alternated between the two places, so as to give each place three sermons each Sabbath. However, but little success attended our labors while in this station.

During the year, our presiding Elder, Rev. Coles Carpenter, who resided in this place, was suddenly called to his reward. Brother C. joined the travelling connection in 1809; he was an excellent man.

I had been elected during the previous year, while travelling in the State of Vermont, to deliver, before the Legislature of that State, what is called the "*Election Sermon.*" Accordingly, in the month of October, I went to Montpelier, and delivered a discourse on Acts xii. 23: "And the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

In this discourse, I endeavored to show that honorable body, and all the good people of the State, — what I presume they all knew before, — that, if a nation would enjoy prosperity, their rulers and people must acknowledge and honor God; they must sustain the cause of virtue, and support education among all classes; they must pay special attention to the subject of religion. I endeavored to make a distinct and strong impression of this fact, that religion had more to do with the prosperity of a nation, than men are generally aware; that legislative bodies may make laws, but it is only by the moral influence which religion exerts on society that they will be carried into effect. No nation can forsake God and prosper; therefore rulers should be the friends of religion; they should themselves be under its influence, and their example should recommend it to others. A copy of my discourse, as is usual, was requested for publication. I was appointed chaplain; but, after remaining with them one Sabbath, I thought it my duty to return to my charge; so I sent up my resignation, and returned to Lansingburgh. I remained in Lansingburgh as pastor of the church but one year.

## TROY CONFERENCE ACADEMY.

1884.

An Agent. — Its history. — Great embarrassment. — Worse and worse. — Verge of ruin. — Liberal proposal. — Liberality of preachers. — Safely moored. — Its great importance and benefit.

This year our Conference was held in Plattsburgh. Here it was resolved that our academy should be located in West Poultney, and that an agent should be appointed to solicit funds with which to erect suitable buildings. To this agency I was appointed.

This appointment was very far from being pleasant to me; but I submitted to it, as I did also, in 1837, to be a resident agent for the purpose of superintending the finishing and furnishing the building, and getting the school into operation. But neither my taste nor my talents were suited to the business of these agencies.

Inasmuch as I have had considerable to do with this academy, perhaps a brief sketch of its history may be acceptable to some of my readers.

In 1832 the New York Conference was divided, by order of the General Conference; the north part of it was set off, and called Troy Conference. The last time we met with the New York Conference, a committee was appointed to inquire into the expediency of establishing a seminary of learning within the bounds of the Troy Conference, and report to the Conference at its first session. This committee reported that it was "*inexpedient* at present." But a good brother, who had been transferred to our Conference at that session, moved that the report be laid on the table. This was carried; and he and two or three others, having all matters arranged, brought in a resolution, that this Conference establish somewhere within its bounds a seminary of learning, by the name of the Troy Conference Academy, and that a

committee be appointed to carry this resolution into effect.

A majority was in favor of this enterprise; and, at the next Conference, it was determined that it should be located at West Poultney, as already stated. This being a very beautiful little village, in a very central part of the Conference, and the people living in its vicinity having subscribed quite liberally, the Conference judged it best to locate it there. I believe we greatly missed it that we did not locate it somewhere in New York State: in such case, we should have realized quite an amount annually from the public Literature Fund.

During the year, I collected about \$3,000, and it was deemed best to commence building, as people were generally unwilling to pay their money, until they saw something going on. So, in 1835, the trustees proceeded to enter into contract for the erection of the buildings; and in the fall of 1837 our school was opened.

Not succeeding in raising funds as we had expected, we were under the necessity of borrowing large sums of money to complete our buildings, for it would not do to stop after we had commenced. Many of our friends subscribed quite liberally, but before we collected their subscriptions, a great many changes had taken place. Some of our subscribers had died, some had removed, and others had failed in business; — so that a large portion of our subscriptions were never realized. The great pressure of money matters, which happened just at this time all through the country, had a great influence, and we were embarrassed exceedingly.

When our buildings were completed in the fall of 1837, and ready for our school to go into operation, we found ourselves in debt, including the \$5000 we gave for the farm, in the sum of about \$22,000. And for this

sum we had to pay an annual interest, and most of it at seven per cent. And, although, for a number of years, we had agents employed in soliciting subscriptions, we sometimes did not get half enough to pay the annual interest. It is a fact in our history which I believe is capable of a mathematical demonstration, that we have paid not less than \$8,000 for the support of agents, and not less than \$17,000 for interest on borrowed money. And all the apology that the trustees can make, is, *they could not possibly avoid it.*

The state of our finances continued to grow worse and worse, until our debt had accumulated to about \$28,000. In 1843 we made another powerful effort to free ourselves, and although we obtained about \$20,000 by subscriptions and scholarships, we never realized over \$16,000 in cash, and a considerable portion of this was in scholarships which was no real benefit to us, for they entailed a heavy burden on the institution; and before we could realize the subscriptions, the interest on the debt was so much that we were enabled to sink the debt only about \$10,000.

Here we were then, in 1849, with a debt on us of \$18,000, and our property mortgaged for about \$10,000. One of the gentlemen who held mortgages thought proper to foreclose; and about the same time, all the personal property was attached for the amount of \$2,000; and here we were on the verge of ruin. What was to be done? Who could tell? At the Conference, held in Sandy Hill, in 1849, the two gentlemen who held the mortgages amounting to \$10,000, and who were well secured, came forward and made a very generous proposal. They said, if the trustees would raise them \$6,000, they would release them from their claim, provided they would pay the \$2,000 for which their

personal property was attached, and provided all the others who had claims against us would agree to take the annual avails of the school until their claims were liquidated.

This plan was adopted. Most of the unsecured creditors were our ministers, who had loaned us small sums, or had purchased scholarships. These brethren, with scarcely any exceptions, agreed to this proposal with a generosity which usually characterizes Methodist preachers, when any burdens are to be borne or sacrifices are to be made. The two gentlemen who made this liberal discount of \$4,000, were, Merrit Clark, Esq., and Roscius R. Kennedy, Esq. Their names will long be remembered by all the friends of the Institution.

By selling most of the farm, and collecting about \$2,000 of our debts, we realized \$6,000; and by a very liberal subscription of several trustees, we raised \$2,000; and in this way we realized a sufficient amount to meet our present distress, and in a great measure remove our embarrassments. Towards making up this last sum, the president of the board, William Y. Ripley, Esq., added to former very liberal subscriptions the sum of \$550. Such liberality deserves to be remembered.

Our school has been rising in public estimation, and has gained a character, equal, to say the least, to any institution of the kind in all this country, and it has done immense good in our community. Many young men of small means have been helped to an education. A large number of young people have been converted while attending this school. Scarcely a year has passed but we have had a revival of religion. There is no doubt more than a hundred have been converted here; several of whom bid fair to make pillars in the church of Christ, and very useful members of community.

## PITTSTOWN CIRCUIT.

1835, 1836.

Good circuit. — An instance of great fanaticism. — Ruinous results. — Loud profession. — Sanctification. — Remarks. — Watson and Wesley. — Catechized a little.

At the Conference of 1835 I was appointed on Pittstown circuit. The first year I was associated with Rev. Samuel Covel, and the second with Rev. W. D. Stead, who were good men and faithful pastors. I fear, however, that our labors did not accomplish much.

This was an old circuit, and embraced several good societies, having several wealthy and influential members, some of whom were liberal and deeply pious. They generally in their families manifested a good degree of hospitality: indeed, they were quite remarkable for their cordiality to their preachers and all their brethren. Methodism had for many years taken a firm hold on the community in all these parts, and exerted a good influence on all classes.

In one place, where, at that time, we had but a small society, we had some years before a large and flourishing society, which had been nearly ruined by a few *fanatics*. These consisted of some members who became exceedingly religious. Their religion consisted principally in getting blest and becoming very happy. They came out in a profession of *entire sanctification*, and they became so holy, in their own estimation, that they could no longer fellowship, nor in any way associate with their brethren. On account of their censorious spirit, and some improprieties in their conduct, several of them were expelled, and some of them withdrew. These, together with some others, who belonged in another place, associated together, and carried matters to great excess.

They imagined that they held constant communion with God, and converse with invisible beings. They pretended they could discern spirits, and judge concerning their brethren's hearts and motives. In their view all the churches were spiritual Babylon, where Satan has his seat; and all good Christians were in duty bound to come out of her, lest they be partakers of her plagues.

There were two men, by the name of W—d and W—r, who were the principal leaders of this fanaticism, and made our people much trouble. They took it upon them to come into our meetings and make disturbance, calling out, "The devil is here!" "Come out of Babylon!" &c. One of these became so exceedingly troublesome that our people were obliged to have him confined in the county jail for disturbing public worship; but this he and his friends regarded as persecution for righteousness' sake.

There were several females also who acted a very conspicuous part. One of them pretended to undertake to fast forty days; but was detected, by the lady of the house where she was living, in a falsehood respecting her fasting. She also declared that she had become so holy that she should never die, but should be translated as Enoch and Elijah were. She fixed on a time when it would take place; but when the time arrived the event did not occur. This failure she attributed to a want of faith in her brethren. Some time after this she was missing, and after some days her body was found a considerable distance from her home in a neighboring wood, in a state of putrefaction. What caused her death is not known.

Such was the ridiculous fanaticism of this deluded company, and the disgraceful conduct of some of the principal ones, that it brought religion into great con-

tempt in that place, for their ridiculous extravagances were acted off under a profession of superior holiness. The cause of Methodism in this part of the town has never been able, since, to rise in public estimation, and I fear it will not until a whole generation shall pass away.

One of the principal ringleaders was living there at the time I travelled the circuit, and is regarded as an enemy to God and religion. He is said to pay no regard to the Sabbath, and very seldom attends any religious meetings. He attended one evening to hear my predecessor or colleague, I do not remember which, and stayed in class-meeting. When the preacher spoke to him, not knowing who he was, he looked up very impudently into his face, and replied, "You are a wolf in sheep's clothing."

When sanctification does not produce holiness of life; when it is made to consist wholly in good feelings; when its fruits are a spirit of censoriousness and spiritual pride; and when it leads a man to say to his brother, "Stand by, I am more holy than thou;" it is not the *sanctification of the Spirit*. Such persons have deceived themselves; they know not what manner of men they are, or what spirit they possess.

I fear that many have deceived themselves in this matter of entire sanctification; they have not formed correct views of what it consists. I remember of once inquiring of a brother who had much to say about entire sanctification in his preaching, and I think he professed to have experienced it,—I said, "In what consists entire sanctification?" He answered me very promptly, "*It is to be filled with joy.*" Who does not see that this is an error? If sanctification does not renew us in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, it certainly does but little toward making us holy here, or fitting us

for heaven. Entire sanctification will manifest itself by other fruits of the Spirit, such as *love, long-suffering, gentleness, and meekness*, beside joy. Gal. v. 22.

I fear that many place this attainment quite too low, much short of what the Bible requires; and hence it sometimes happens, as Mr. Fletcher remarks, "that you hear them profess to have attained Christian perfection, when they have not so much as attained the mental serenity of a philosopher, or the candor of a good-natured, conscientious heathen." I think a profession of entire sanctification should always be accompanied with holy living.

I fear there are many persons who think more of being able to tell the time and place, when and where, they received this blessing, and how very happy it made them feel, than they do of living so circumspectly as to give evidence that they have not deceived themselves in this matter. Such persons, it is to be feared, will sooner or later bring this doctrine into disrepute, and, it may be, themselves and religion into disgrace.

Rev. Richard Watson says: "To me it has long been a subject of regret, that, in many places, that blessed doctrine (Christian perfection) has been brought into some degree of disrepute, by the objectionable spirit of the persons who have been its most zealous and prominent advocates."

Mr. Jackson, in his life of Mr. Watson, (page 426,) says of Mr. Watson: "Like Mr. Wesley, he did not himself profess to have attained it; but, during the subsequent part of his life, he exhibited its fruits in full maturity and beauty."

I cannot but think that in general the best way to profess our entire sanctification, is not by loud and bold declarations, but, by the holiness of our life, show its fruits,

like Mr. Watson and Mr. Wesley, "in full maturity and beauty." When persons are really holy there will be but little occasion for them to make a loud profession of it, for it will be sufficiently apparent by its fruit. And where this evidence of a man's superior holiness does not exist, his own declarations concerning it will be of but little use.

I am aware that I differ from some brethren on this point. Some attach more importance to a public profession of entire sanctification than I do. Once, in the annual examination of characters in our Conference, when my name was called, and the usual inquiry made, a brother stated that he had understood that I taught our people that they must not profess entire sanctification. To this charge, in its *general* form, I pleaded not guilty; for I believed there were some who might on *suitable occasions* make this profession with great propriety, for no doubt they had attained it.

But I acknowledged to the Conference, that there were some persons I was sorry to hear make any such profession; and that I had occasionally given such, a little advice. I thought that such as indulged in a censorious spirit were easily irritated, could bear no contradiction, and would flare up if anybody displeased them, — persons who were not careful to fulfil their business promises, pay their honest debts, and to live in the practice of all Christian duties, had better talk very modestly about their high attainments in holiness. I frankly confessed to the Conference, that I thought the best way in general to profess entire sanctification, is, by the amiableness of our spirit, and holiness of our life. And I remarked that as to my own experience in this matter, when I took in view the *good feelings* I sometimes felt in my heart, I was inclined to believe I had been wholly

sanctified; but when I considered the fruit which appeared in my life and conversation, I concluded it would be best to be very modest in my profession. This declaration of my views on this subject elicited no vote of censure; therefore, I conclude that my views are not peculiar. Indeed, I know that many think as I do.

Mr. Wesley seemed well aware that persons are liable to make higher professions than their spirit and conduct will warrant; therefore he said we should speak "more rarely in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification." He advises that we speak of it when called thereto, not in "magnificent and pompous words." He thinks we need give it no *general* name, such as "perfection, sanctification, or the second blessing." Instead of this, he recommends that we say, "At such a time I felt a change which I am not able to express, and since that time I have not felt pride, or self-will, or wrath, or unbelief, or anything but a fulness of love to God and all mankind." And in connection with this profession, he says, "See that your practice be in all things suitable to your profession, adorning the doctrines of God our Saviour."

## SUPERNUMERARY.

1837, 1838.

Resident agent. — Hard business. — Nearly used up.

The trustees of the Troy Conference Academy desired that I would afford some further services as a *resident agent*, for the purpose of superintending the finishing of our buildings and furnishing them, so as to open our school. To this I consented, and for this purpose I requested the relation of a *supernumerary*.

Although I served the institution in this capacity only one year, I requested my relation to be continued the

same for the year ensuing, for I felt as though I was about used up. But few of our brethren are fully aware of the amount of toil, anxiety, and sacrifice, which it has cost some of the preachers to bring forward this noble institution of learning. But this is well understood where our record is, on high. It is some satisfaction to see that by their efforts in connection with this seminary, literature and science have been promoted, Methodism has been honored, and God has been glorified.

## TROY DISTRICT.

1839—1848.

Districts in former days. — Laborious preachers. — Great increase. — Millerism. — Its results. — Wesleyans. — Misnamed.

At the session of our Conference held in Schenectady, in 1839, I was appointed presiding Elder on Troy District. This district included all those places where I had spent the days of my childhood and youth. It lies along the east side of Hudson river, extending to the southern and eastern boundaries of the Troy Conference.

In 1803, at the time I united with the Methodists, all the territory in this district, and even more, was embraced in what was then called Pittsfield Circuit, and all that part of Troy Conference which lies east of the Hudson, and also all Lower Canada, as it was then called, belonged to what was then denominated Pittsfield District. At that time, in all the country which is now embraced in Troy Conference, there were only *twenty-two* travelling preachers, and a very few local preachers. Now, in 1851, there are one hundred and ninety-seven travelling preachers, and one hundred and forty local preachers. Then, the harvest was truly great, and the laborers were but few; but what few there were in those days, were truly *laborers*.

Some of the old preachers have told me they were accustomed in those days to travel on horseback, and frequently would have to ride from twenty to forty miles to reach their appointment. They generally preached every day, and sometimes twice. On Sabbaths they usually preached three times, and not unfrequently rode ten or fifteen miles. Surely there were giants in those days.

A few of these old veterans of the cross, who labored in these northern regions in the early days of Methodism, are yet alive, and some of them are yet in the effective ranks. Among those who still continue in the itinerancy, are the following:—Rev. Bishop Hedding, Rev. L. Clark, Rev. Dr. Bangs, Rev. S. Howe, Rev. H. Stead, and Rev. P. Cook. During their ministry, about half a century has passed away in the history of Methodism. They have lived to witness a change in the affairs of our beloved Zion. When they commenced their labors, Methodists were to be found only here and there, and houses of worship were “very few, and very far between.” Since then we have counted our ministers and churches by thousands, and our members by hundreds of thousands.

The four years which I spent on Troy District were years of prosperity to the church within its bounds. There was a considerable increase of membership, but this increase was caused, to some extent, here, as it was in other parts of the country, by an apprehension that the world was about to be destroyed; or, in other words, by the influence of what was called

#### MILLERISM.

This notion, that the Second Advent was to take place in 1843, was started by William Miller, who resided near Whitehall, N. Y. He was a member of the Baptist church. I have been informed that in the early part

of his life he was an avowed Deist, and was in the habit of repelling all arguments in favor of the Bible, by insisting that what could not be perfectly understood by us, is no revelation; that much of the Bible is of this character, especially the prophecies, which relate to the history of the latter ages of the world; therefore, the Bible is not a revelation. But, after some years, Mr. Miller changed his views of the Bible, and became religious. In conversation one day with one of his former friends, he urged upon him the belief of the Bible as a revelation from God; but his friend replied by presenting his own argument of former days, that whatever could not be understood by us could be no revelation. After a little pause, Mr. Miller replied, that if his friend would give him suitable time to study the Bible, if he did not succeed in explaining the prophecies, he would not ask him to believe it, but would renounce it himself.

After Mr. Miller had become thus pledged, he set himself at work at this difficult task; and when the time had expired which he had allotted, which was somewhere about 1836, he came out with his system, which has ever since been known by the name of MILLERISM. The great distinguishing feature of this system was, that Christ would make his second appearance in 1843; that then the wicked would be destroyed from the face of all the earth, by fire from heaven; that then God would restore the earth to its primitive beauty, and Christ would appear personally on earth, and set up his kingdom; all the saints would at that time be raised from the dead, and live and reign on earth a thousand years.

Mr. Miller had most success in gaining proselytes among his own denomination. Several Baptist ministers and a large number of members fell into this notion. A few of our preachers and some of our people, as well

as some Presbyterians, were carried away with this new thing ; and on the whole it made quite a stir all through this part of the country. Many people became much alarmed, and the result was, that during the years 1842 and 1843 there was quite an attention to religion, and many were added to the different churches.

Although Millerism excited considerable attention for a year or two, time, the best interpreter of prophecy, as it rolled along convinced all that these wise men, who had made such shrewd calculations as to times and seasons, and were so positive in their declarations, had nevertheless missed the mark. As it had been expected by many, so it happened, a terrible reäction followed. It was the occasion of great temptation to many who had been alarmed and thereby induced to become religious ; while to many it was the cause of their renouncing the Bible, and falling into infidelity and the snare of the devil. There had been a considerable influx into the different churches, but in every direction there was a great falling away. And, as I said, there was a great increase of membership in our societies all through the Troy district during the four years I travelled it, yet we lost the larger portion of those members in less than four years after.

Many preached Millerism, hoping that, by availing themselves of the fear that prevailed, they might bring some to Christ, but the final result has very clearly shown that it is not best "to do evil that good may come." No results that are permanently good can come from false doctrines or a wrong course of action. There is no occasion for pious fraud to promote truth. I have no doubt that many of the Millerites were very sincere, but they certainly were strangely imposed upon by their false reasonings and heated imaginations.

Some thousands have withdrawn from the different churches of which they were members, thinking it their duty to come out from what they denominated Spiritual Babylon, lest they should be partakers in her sins. They have organized what they denominate the "Adventist Church," and profess to be constantly looking for Christ's second coming. And they generally are in the habit of censuring all other denominations as being fallen, and but little better than Anti-Christ.

I know not but God may cause the *folly* as well as the "wrath of man" to praise him, and finally overrule this miserable delusion of Millerism to bring about some good results. But its immediate effect has been to mislead and ruin many Christians, and strengthen the hands of many scoffers and infidels. It has ever since been exceedingly difficult to make much impression on many people's minds in reference to future judgment and the punishment of the wicked; they are ready to say, "O, this is all of a piece with Millerism."

## WESLEYANS.

1848.

This year, which closed my labors on Troy district, gave rise to the organization of a new society, who call themselves "WESLEYANS."

Rev. Orange Scott, of the New England Conference, was the principal leader in this secession; and on this account they obtained with many the name of SCOTTITES. This name, I think, is more appropriate than Wesleyans; for certainly in many things they differ from the views of John Wesley. They entirely refuse to admit to membership in their societies, such as hold slaves, under any circumstances; but Mr. Wesley admitted many slave-holders into his societies. They

wholly renounce the Episcopal form of church government,—a form which Mr. Wesley preferred to all others, and made special provision for it. If he did not call the superintendents whom he appointed, by the title of bishops, yet they were bishops to all intents and purposes. In several other respects they differ from Mr. Wesley, as well as from the Wesleyans in England. When they first organized, it was on account, they said, of the connection the church held with southern slave-holders, but, very shortly after, this pretence was taken away; but they had committed themselves, and it was difficult to retrace their steps.

There were several preachers who were members of the Troy Conference, who united in this new organization, and were considered among the principal leaders; and there were also some private members who left us. This was a circumstance we very much regretted. I question not the purity of their motives, but I doubt the wisdom of their course. I think these brethren have not succeeded quite as well as they had calculated,—they appear to have overrated their talents and influence. When they came to manage for themselves, no longer sustained by the M. E. Church, they found it difficult to do much. As far as my observation extends, they have made very little impression on the public mind. They certainly have done, as yet, very little to benefit the slaves of the south. In many parts of our country they have found it exceedingly difficult to maintain any distinct existence. I believe that at present the prospect is that they will do but very little to emancipate the slaves, or overthrow the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In some places they now and then have some additions of members, consisting principally of persons who

have become somewhat disaffected among us, or finding their standing a little precarious, think it most prudent to withdraw. It now and then happens that persons who emigrate from England to this country, deceived by the name which they have assumed, unite with them, supposing they are the same as the Wesleyan Methodists of their own country.

## DEEP AFFLICTIONS.

1843.

Death of Mrs. S. — Her father's family. — The daughter's death.

On the 9th of May, I was called to a very severe trial, in the death of my wife. She was a very sincere Christian, and had been from her childhood. She joined the M. E. Church when only thirteen years of age, and had ever since maintained a consistent Christian character.

Her father, Mr. Samuel Jones, resided, when she was young, in Westchester county, N. Y. He kept a public house in a very wicked neighborhood, until he became sickened and disgusted with the wickedness of the people, which no doubt his bar-room had greatly contributed to produce. He resolved, at length, to quit the business, and turn his ball-room into a place for religious worship. Accordingly, he invited a neighboring minister to come to his house and preach to the people; but the minister declined, thinking the people were so wicked it would be of no use to preach to them; not recollecting that when the bar-room ceased its operation, the people could be reached by divine truth. He then applied to a minister of another denomination, who gave him some encouragement that he would come; but while he delayed, Mr. Jones happened to meet a friend of his, to whom he mentioned his intention and disappointment. His friend told him he knew a Methodist preacher who

would come; the Methodist preachers would go anywhere, however wicked the people might be, for they thought they might be the means of making them better. Mr. Jones knew nothing about Methodist preachers; however, at the recommendation of his friend, he concluded to admit them. Accordingly, the Methodist minister was invited, and shortly after he visited the place; and from this time his house became a regular preaching place, and a home for our preachers for many years; and the result was, a revival ensued, a society was formed, and Mr. Jones' family, consisting of the parents and *nine* children, were all converted and became Methodists. My wife was the youngest of the family. All, except one, and she is ninety years of age, have departed this life, and I believe gone to heaven.

At the time of my wife's death, we had been married a little more than thirty-two years. She had endured the toils and privations incident to the life of a travelling minister, not only without murmuring, but with that patience and pleasure which are only the fruits of grace. In the earlier days of my ministry, the families of preachers were not provided for as they are at this time. She remained unto the last firmly attached to the church of her early choice. She died triumphant.

My afflictions did not stop here. Shortly after my wife's death, my youngest daughter was taken sick; and, in a few months, I had to lay her by her mother's side.

“ O, what are all my sufferings here,  
If, Lord, thou count me meet  
With that enraptured host to appear,  
And worship at thy feet.  
  
Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,  
Or take my friends away;  
But let me find my friends again,  
In that eternal day.”

## SUPERNUMERARY.

1843.

Not sick. — Unpopular. — More useful in comparative retirement.

Partly on account of the change which had taken place in my family by the death of my wife, and partly owing to a fear that I should remain in the effective ranks until my services would no longer be acceptable nor profitable to the people, I desired the Conference to give me the relation of a supernumerary.

I told my brethren plainly that I did not pretend to be sick, but I knew that I was not a suitable man to be *presiding Elder*, and I felt that the responsibility was too great for me. As to being appointed to a *station*, I thought it would be improper; for the brethren in most stations thought that their place was a very important one, and would want a man of activity and youth to sustain them; and I knew of no station within the bounds of the Conference where I had reason to think I should be acceptable. And as to a *circuit*, I could not muster courage enough at my time of life to undertake the labors and travels connected with such an appointment. I pledged myself to the Conference that I would preach what I could, and would give all my services to the church without any compensation, while I held this relation, and did not perform effective services. My brethren were pleased to comply with my request.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1844.

Slavery. — Bishop Andrew. — Separation. — It was high time.

The General Conference of 1844 was held in the city of New York. The doings of this Conference will hold a very conspicuous place in the history of the M. E. Church.

The subject of slavery had always been a subject of deep interest to our ministers and people, and it stood as a living testimony in our discipline, to which the church, both north and south, had unanimously assented, that "we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery." But for several years, the northern portion of the church had become more than ever convinced of its evil, and many not only desired to arrest its further progress, but to eradicate it from the church. Unfortunately, just before the session of this General Conference, one of our general superintendents, Bishop Andrew, had become connected with slavery, by being married to a lady who was the owner of several slaves.

If the Bishop would have consented to emancipate his slaves, the difficulty would have been removed, but this he declined; and, indeed, by the advice of his friends, he had put it beyond his power to do so, by having conveyed them to trustees by a deed of trust. This relation to slavery it was believed would be a great impediment to his usefulness in the church; especially through all the northern or non-slaveholding states. After much discussion, the following resolution was passed: "Resolved, that it is the sense of this General Conference, that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains." There were 178 members present; 110 voted in favor of this resolution, and 68 against it. Although the decision in this case resulted in a separation in the church, between the north and the south, and gave rise to a new organization in the south, I think this decision was a righteous one. If the result was a calamity to the church, I have no doubt it prevented a much greater calamity which would have followed. I think the time had fully come when a separation was absolutely necessary for the prosperity of the

church. How can two walk together except they be agreed? The attachment of the southern portion of the church to their system of slavery could no longer be tolerated. When it had gotten into the Episcopacy, it was time to pause, and if it could not be excluded from this department, it was time that a separation take place. I wish I were as well satisfied with all the acts of my life, as I am with what I did in voting with the majority, in this business.

This division has since been the occasion of considerable contention along the borders that lie between the two churches, and a source of much affliction to many brethren on both sides; and it has resulted in a lawsuit about the property belonging to the Book Concern. Neither our book agents nor the General Conference had any right to divide this property, or even its avails, until there was a constitutional alteration of the restrictive rule in our discipline. The General Conference, in 1848, directed that an application be made to the annual Conferences for such alteration as would authorize an amicable adjustment by arbitration. But the southern brethren would not consent to an arbitration, and, without waiting to know what would be the decision of the annual Conferences, commenced a suit in law.

In the summer of 1851, after hearing testimony and pleadings in the case, the court recommended to the parties to settle it by arbitration, and whatever should be the award, the court would sanction it. Our agents immediately made the proposal according to the recommendation of the court; but the commissioners of the south have refused to do it, except so far as the *amount* and *mode* of payment are concerned. They insist on a division of the property, although fully aware that it cannot be made, except the annual Conferences consent, or the court so decides.

## A L B A N Y .

W A S H I N G T O N   S T R E E T .

1844, 1845.

History. — New church. — Church debt. — Rescue. — Messrs. Schuyler and Durant. — Present prospects.

In 1844, there seemed to be a call for my services, and I consented to take an effective relation, and was stationed at Washington street church, in Albany.

The society in this charge was organized in 1835. It was made up at first of members from the other charges in the city, who purchased a small church in the western part of the city, where they worshipped several years, and prospered. At length, finding themselves somewhat incommoded for want of room, and not considering their location as being in the most suitable place, they were encouraged, by the prospects which seemed to open before them, to build a larger house. They did so, on Washington street—a very fine location for that part of the city.

But in this enterprise they undertook too much; they built at a cost quite beyond their means. Our brethren did not realize as much aid from the citizens in that part of the city as they expected; and, for some reason which cannot be explained, the church cost a considerable more than it ought, and more than it was worth. At least, this was a pretty general opinion of all who were acquainted with the concern. If this was owing to want of economy in those who managed its affairs, it should admonish us in future to employ men in such matters who well understand such business. If it was owing to any other reason, the day that cometh will bring all things to light. I think it very important, in order to give satisfaction to all concerned, that trustees who undertake

to build churches, should make such records of all their income and outlays, that they can satisfactorily show what is the exact state of their financial affairs; a record which shall speak for itself in all coming time.

Whatever the defect may have been, the result was, that when the church was completed, there was a debt upon it amounting to \$6,000, for which the society had to pay \$420 annual interest. This was a great burden for a small and feeble society to bear; a burden that well-nigh ruined them. Notwithstanding their public collections, sinking fund and annual subscriptions, and other means to which they resorted, they could but very little more than meet their current expenses. Their church debt accumulated, until they told the mortgagee that he must foreclose and sell the house. But the house could not be sold for more than his claim. The mortgagee, Mr. Clark Durant, was an excellent man, but not a member of any church; he had already been very liberal to us, and would do nothing to embarrass us, and therefore declined foreclosing.

In 1850, our brethren all through the city, feeling loth that we should lose our hold in so important a place as Washington street, took hold of the business with considerable zeal, and, by their means, and the liberality and enterprise of Mr. Thomas Schuyler, a member of the M. E. Church in Ferry street, and the further abundant liberality of Mr. Durant, the debt was reduced to *one thousand dollars*. Many thanks are certainly due to the above named gentlemen.

Of all debts, church debts are most to be dreaded, for none are more difficult to pay. It is certainly desirable that our people should generally guard against them, by not building more costly than is really necessary.

We have some excellent brethren belonging to this

station, who have done themselves great honor in standing by the cause of Methodism in all its difficulties in which it has labored, and bearing burdens like valiant men. Prospects have greatly brightened among them lately. There is no doubt, at present, that Methodism will be sustained in that part of the city, and be a great blessing to the people.

When I had finished the year in Albany, I concluded it was best to return to my supernumerary relation; accordingly, at the next Conference, at my request, I was so returned in the minutes. My labors this year were mostly in South Troy, where we had a feeble society, who had lately built a new church. I spent several weeks at Bennington.

## VISIT TO ENGLAND.

1846.

AT the session of the Troy Conference, held at Keysville, May, 1846, a resolution was passed, approving the object contemplated in the call which had been made for the World's Convention of delegates, for the purpose of forming an EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE in the city of London. The Conference also resolved to send one of its members to attend that Convention. The choice of the brethren was determined by ballot, and, to my very great surprise, their choice fell on me. I was elected to this distinguished honor. But I presume it was owing somewhat to the circumstance that I could be spared from the work more conveniently than any other member, as I held the relation of a supernumerary.

## THE VOYAGE.

Grandeur of the ocean. — Pleasant society. — Social companion. — Safe arrival.

Immediately after the Conference had adjourned, I commenced making preparations for my voyage. After spending a week in the city of New York, I embarked, Tuesday, July 2d, in the packet ship Wellington, Capt. Chadwick, bound for London.

This was the first time I was ever on the wide ocean, and, as I was leaving my native land, my mind was very solemnly impressed. There is nothing below the heavens so truly grand as the ocean. Its vastness, its perpetual restlessness, and terrible heavings; its majestic

music, when agitated by the storm, and its fearful perils, are things of which I had formed very inadequate ideas, until I found myself looking out on its moving billows. Then I felt like a helpless worm; yet, however, under the protection of an Almighty Being who holds both the winds and the waves under his control.

Now I in some measure realized the glories and the grandeur connected with the mighty deep, whose elements of sublimity cannot be described. Our noble vessel was floating where many had been engulfed with all their wealth, their passengers, and all their crews. They were, perhaps, then, directly beneath us, among the coral rocks and caverns of the unfathomable deep, where the light of the sun has never penetrated. In this dark cemetery, the prince and the peasant, the rich merchant and the poor emigrant, lie undistinguished. They sleep in this watery bed, without a monument to show the passing traveller their whereabouts, or tell their mournful tale of woe. The monotonous requiem produced by winds and waves, is all that is heard from age to age, over the unseen resting-place of these unfortunate dead.

There were on board four ministers; one of the Reformed Dutch Church, one Protestant Episcopal, and two Methodist Episcopal; three of these were going to attend the Convention. The passengers were generally very civil, and the passage, on the whole, was very pleasant, except the inconvenience which some of us endured on account of sea-sickness. Of this I had my full share. From the time we lost sight of land, after leaving New York, I was not well one day, till we came within the land breeze of England.

We had three sermons on board during our voyage, and one or the other of the clergymen asked a blessing always when we sat down to eat. We frequently united

in singing hymns, and had occasionally very pleasant and profitable religious conversation.

One of our number was very social in his manners. He could boast of being in the regular succession, talk of the validity and efficacy of the ordinances, defend some of the peculiarities of his creed, preach, sing hymns, and laugh, play at shuffle-board and chess with men who made no profession of religion. In all these matters he seemed to be in his element. By some means this reverend gentleman became aware that some of us entertained different views from him respecting ministerial amusements, and remarked one day that in England it was not regarded at all improper for ministers to amuse themselves with cards, fishing, or hunting. I told him I thought the reproof which a fox-hunting minister received from a Quaker was very appropriate. The minister inquired of a Quaker whether he had seen the fox; the Quaker, perceiving he was the minister of the parish, replied, "If I were the fox I would hide where thee would never find me." "Where would you hide?" inquired the minister. He replied, "I would hide in thy study."

Just as we were coming into port this gentleman's levity of conduct and conversation was so unbecoming a minister, I deemed it my duty to tell him plainly what I thought of him. If ministers will not tell each other their faults, who will? But he regarded my reproof as an insult, and reproached me, in quite a public manner, for what he called my "*long face*" and "*Methodist cant*;" and desired to know whether I wished to bring him *down to Methodism*. I told him I should like to see him imitate the example of Christ, and maintain the dignity of a Christian minister. This gentleman did not attend the Convention.

Our captain was an excellent man, and seemed to take pleasure in making us all comfortable. He gave us a very good proof of his skill in his profession. On the morning of the nineteenth day after we left New York, he told us that, if he had kept his reckoning right, we should see the lights on Scilly Islands at 8 o'clock that evening. We were all anxious, when the time came, to hear from the mast-head; so he sent up a man to see if the light was in sight. But no light appeared. However, he had not been on deck more than fifteen minutes, when, to our great joy, the lights were seen from the deck. Thus were demonstrated the care of Divine Providence, the stability of nature's laws, and the skill and integrity of our captain.

Persons who have never sailed on the stormy ocean can scarcely realize the feelings of the passengers and crew, when they arrive in sight of the destined country, and near their port. Toward the close of the following day we took on board a pilot, and soon came in sight of Portland, and one prominent point of land after another appeared in view, until we distinctly saw the Isle of Wight on our right hand and Portsmouth near by. We came to anchor in the harbor of Portsmouth, on the twenty-second day after we left New York.

## PORTSMOUTH.

Thankful. — Fine harbor. — Strongly fortified.

On Wednesday morning, July 22, about 9 o'clock, a boat came off to us having a custom-house officer on board, and several of us went on shore, with a view to take the cars and go by railroad to London. It would take two or three days to reach London by the ship, but by the cars we could reach it in four hours.

As I set my foot once more on land, my heart seemed filled with gratitude to our heavenly Father for his providential care. I felt like praising his name aloud. Most of us left all our baggage on board, so that, not being encumbered with anything, we could go where we pleased.

We spent about four hours in visiting the different parts of this ancient and strongly fortified city. It was at the time of the semi-annual fair, and, of course, the city was thronged, and we had a view of many curious and rare things.

Portsmouth is the seat of the civil and military establishments, and the residence of the port-admiral. Its streets are generally spacious, and many of its public buildings are elegant. The dock-yard, which is entered by an immense gateway, contains immense storehouses, handsome residences and extensive work-shops. On the gun wharf are multitudes of carronades and mortars, with shot and shells of all sizes arranged in immense pyramidal piles. The fortifications of this place are deemed impregnable, and its harbor surpasses any other in the United Kingdom.

After spending about four hours in viewing the city, its navy-yard and strong fortifications, we became wearied and hungry. It was the first time I had enjoyed any appetite for food since I had left New York. After partaking of a good dinner, we set off for London, and passing through a most beautiful country, which abounded with immense fields of wheat just then ready to harvest, we arrived in London about 8 o'clock in the evening. The ship did not arrive until two days after.

## LONDON.

## CITY ROAD CHAPEL.

Mr. Wesley's house. — Chapel. — Mr. Wesley's grave. — A. Clark. — J. Benson. — R. Watson.

We arrived at London three weeks before the time appointed for the Convention to meet, and, therefore, had some time to look about this great metropolis of the world. We took lodgings at the house of Mr. Randal, No. 7 King street, Cheapside.

The first thing which attracted my attention, and in which I felt the most interest, was the City Road Chapel, the place of Mr. John Wesley's residence at the time of his death, and the place of his interment. This place I visited the day after I arrived in the city.

This chapel is situated on a wide and beautiful street called City Road. It stands in the centre of a plat of ground, which may be twenty rods in length and eighteen wide. On each corner of its front is an elegant brick house. These are parsonages. The one on the left hand is occupied by the Service Reader, and the other by the Minister in charge of the London Circuit. Rev. Mr. Loomis occupied it when I was there. This is called Mr. Wesley's House; it was erected for him, and for several years before his death it was occupied by him, and from this place he took his flight to his house not made with hands. I went into the room in which he died. All the furniture and everything in it is said to remain just as they were when Mr. Wesley occupied it. I sat in his armed chair in which he used to sit.

Between these two houses there extends along the side-walk a strong iron fence in front of the yard. About half-way between the houses there is a large gate open-

ing on to a marble-flagged walk which leads to the chapel ; on each side of which the ground is filled up with marble or granite monuments of the dead.

The chapel stands about in the centre of this plat of ground, perhaps seven rods from the first gate. It is a brick building, about sixty-five by ninety feet, and is plain in its appearance both outside and within. Here I attended church the first Sabbath after I arrived, and heard an excellent discourse. And before I left London I had the honor of preaching here twice.

In this, as well as in all the Wesleyan chapels in London, the public service commences at ten o'clock, and at five in the evening. Here, as in many other chapels in London and elsewhere, the service of the Established Church, with a very little variation, is read in the morning. They omit the prayer for bishops, and pray for all ministers of the gospel. I suppose it is because they entertain the same view of bishops that their brethren do in this country, viz. : that there is no distinct *order* of bishops, but that bishop is an *office*, instead of a distinct *order* in the ministry.

Directly in the rear of the chapel, about twenty feet distant, is Mr. Wesley's grave, over which is a plain marble monument ; and by his side there lie also the remains of Dr. Adam Clark. At a little distance is Mr. Benson's grave, and somewhat nearer the chapel is Mr. Watson's resting place. Over all these graves there is a suitable monument erected, and each is enclosed by an iron fence. It would be difficult to find another spot of earth on this globe, no larger than this, which contains the remains of four such eminent men as these.

**BUNHILL FIELDS.**

Graves of eminent men.

This is the name of a burying ground which lies on the other side of the street, directly opposite the City Road Chapel. This is a very ancient burial place, and is occupied exclusively by Dissenters. Here are the remains of several of the martyrs, who suffered in the reign of Queen Mary. Many eminent and pious men were buried here. Here we read the names of John Goodwin, John Bunyan and Dr. Watts. And here lie the remains of Mrs. Susanna Wesley, the mother of Rev. John Wesley.

**THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.**

House of Commons. — House of Lords.

Since the Parliament House was burned, the Parliament has met in the ancient halls in Westminster. By means of a friend, I obtained an order for admission to the

**HOUSE OF COMMONS.**

At the time I visited the House, there happened to be no matter of importance to call out the talents of any of their great men, and I had not been in more than half an hour before the galleries were ordered to be cleared, because the vote on some question was about to be taken. So short was my stay that I could do but little more than make some observations of a very general character.

I should think the hall in which they assembled is not a very convenient place for such an assembly. It is surrounded by a gallery which is occupied by the specta-

tors. The hall and its galleries were most brilliantly illuminated. I was told that in former times it was lighted by means of two hundred and forty wax candles; but now gas is used instead of candles. The gas burners are placed in the ceiling overhead, and into the midst of the flame a stream of oxygen is introduced by numerous small pipes. The light so produced is very brilliant, but softened by the intervention of ground glass. A more perfect substitute for day-light I believe cannot be found. I had been seated but a few minutes when the light commenced pouring down its radiating influence, imparting a chastened brilliancy to every object within our view. The light which I obtained on this occasion was more of a physical nature, than moral or political, for we were all ordered out of the galleries, and in such haste as was rather unpleasant.

#### HOUSE OF LORDS.

I had a desire to visit the House of Lords, but having enjoyed so little satisfaction in what I had heard and seen in the House of Commons, I scarcely thought it worth while to be at much pains to procure an order for admission. It is more difficult to procure an order for admission to the House of Lords, than to the other house, for its members are more inaccessible. I concluded if I could get admission without an order I would go in. So, at the time of the members' entering, I placed myself as near the door as I was allowed. I waited until all the members had passed in, and I then surveyed the officers who kept guard around the entrance, and selected one of them whose appearance I liked best, and addressed him with as much appearance of dignity as my conscience would allow. I told him I was a *stranger* just arrived from the United States of America;

that I had a desire to be admitted into the House of Lords, and that I knew of no way that I could get an introduction to any of the noble lords and obtain an order. I asked him if he could not admit me without an order. He eyed me for a moment, and said, "You can pass on through the entry, where you see a lamp, and address the door-keeper." So I bowed to him, and passed up a long, narrow alley, and came to a gentleman dressed in uniform. I told him what I had told the officer, and inquired if he could consistently let me pass. After a moment's pause, he motioned with his hand, and, in a low tone of voice, said, "Pass in, and turn to your left." So I thanked him, and passed in. I supposed all my difficulty was now over; but when I had ascended a flight of stairs and was about to enter the gallery, another officer said, "Where is your order, sir?" I replied, "Sir, I have no order; I told the officer and the door-keeper that I was a stranger from the United States, and have no means of access to any noble lord to obtain an order, and they have let me in; can you let me pass?" He waved his hand, and said, "Go in." So on I passed, and, some gentlemen kindly making way for me, I obtained a seat in front of the gallery, where I had an excellent opportunity of seeing the whole assembly, and distinctly hearing all the speakers.

The hall in which they were assembled is long and rather narrow. At the further end, in a kind of recess, stood an arm-chair; this was the seat of royal majesty, before which were damask curtains partly drawn aside. In front of this recess, at the distance of perhaps twenty feet, sat the Lord Chancellor, on what is called "the woolsack," a seat which somewhat resembles a sofa. He presides in the House of Lords; and truly, in his

appropriate badges and flowing wig, he makes a very venerable and dignified appearance. On his right and left, a little in the rear, sat two officers who accompany him when he enters and when he departs. A long table extended down the centre, at which two secretaries were seated. The seats on which the lords were seated were a kind of lounge covered with red damask, and extended lengthwise, parallel with the table. The general appearance of these noble lords was not quite as dignified as I had been led to expect. Several of them appeared rather young to fill so important a place in the national assembly.

The subject of discussion that evening was of considerable interest, and I had the pleasure of hearing the celebrated Lord Brougham, who has been considered as the greatest man in the British Parliament. He spoke about an hour, but I was somewhat disappointed as respects his eloquence. I have heard many speakers whose eloquence I should greatly prefer. He had too much pomposity and gesticulation to suit me.

On returning to my lodgings I was considerably complimented for my success in gaining admittance without an order. They said it was a rare occurrence, and must be owing to my being an American. Well, be it so; I would as soon be proud of our nation's character abroad as to be proud of my own character.

## WINDSOR CASTLE.

Royal palace. — St. George's Chapel. — Princess Charlotte's monument. — Reflections.

Windsor Castle is an ancient royal palace. It is situated on the Thames, about eighteen miles west of London. It is perhaps the most splendid and costly

palace in the kingdom. Around it is quite a town, and near it, on the opposite side of the Thames, is that very ancient seat of learning, Eton College.

In order to obtain access to this royal residence, we had to procure an order of admission. I understand it is not accessible to strangers only in the absence of its royal inmates. An order was procured for ten persons, and I was invited to be one of them. We took the cars at London west-end, and at Slough station we took an omnibus. We were conducted by officers through all the principal rooms of the palace, in which were splendor and magnificence on a large scale, such as are seldom found except in kings' palaces. But in the midst of this grandeur, I could not avoid recollecting that millions of her majesty's subjects were pining in want.

After having passed through all the principal halls, and seen the splendid rooms where those dwell who wear soft raiment, we again entered the court, and ascended the lofty tower, which, if I recollect, is upwards of three hundred feet in height. It is built of massive stones, and is ascended by winding stairs inside.

The castle is situated on the declivity of a hill on the south side of the Thames. The whole of the buildings, including the court in their centre, are said to cover twelve acres of land. They are defended by batteries and towers.

Connected with the castle is St. George's Chapel, which is one of the most elegant specimens of the florid Gothic. It is said that George III. spent nearly twenty thousand pounds in embellishing it. This is the place where the royal family attend divine service. We entered this chapel by a door on the side, near the end farthest from the pulpit, into a kind of vestibule.

Directly opposite the door, on the other side of the chapel, is a recess containing the monument of Princess Charlotte, whose history is somewhat familiar to us. Her untimely death, effected no doubt by murderous hands, caused at the time a great sensation throughout the nation. This monument presents a memento of a nation's sympathy, as well as a memorial of virtue.

This monument presents the princess as extended on an elevated marble slab, and surrounded by several female figures, all in full size, and in the attitude of deep devotion expressive of silent grief. One of the females, who stands near her feet, holds a small infant in her arms; and a most beautiful fragile human form with wings stands in the rear, near her head, on a little elevation, and seems looking on the interesting group with a smiling countenance, and, with one hand elevated, he is pointing upward and seeming to say, in the language of faith and hope,

“There is a heaven o'er yonder skies,  
A heaven where pleasure never dies.”

From the chapel we went to see the royal stables. There was nothing here to excite our admiration. The horses were no way superior, and the carriages appeared rather clumsy; they were generally of an ancient style. Several of them had been used by their monarchs in very ancient times.

On the whole, Windsor Castle is a place of much beauty, and suitable for such to dwell in as wear soft raiment, and have an income like that of Queen Victoria, of more than £200,000 each year; - but it is a very unsuitable place for a pious Christian to reside. This royal residence is like every other dwelling-place of man; — sin has entered there, and sorrow and death

have entered, too. Kings' palaces cannot make a paradise: thorns are connected with roses; cares and anxieties are connected with crowns. Death will find us, though we hide in palaces, and conquer us although we are seated on thrones, and drive us as easily from strong castles as from our cottages. Should we clothe ourselves in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, there still may be in the heart an aching void the world can never fill. As we passed from the inner court of the castle through the beautiful arch-way, where so many great men had passed, I was inclined to repeat to myself the words of the poet —

“ Let others stretch their arms like seas,  
To grasp in all the shore;  
Grant me the riches of thy grace,  
And I 'll desire no more.”

## WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Its antiquity.—Monuments.—Lord and Lady Nightingale's monument.—Henry VII.'s chapel.—Royal chair.

This ancient abbey is in London, near the new Parliament House now in the course of erection. It was built, I am told, as early as the sixth century, and was originally designed for a Roman Catholic church, dedicated to St. Peter, and subsequently it became a monastery. It was afterwards greatly improved by Henry III., and in 1502 Henry VII. built the chapel which is attached to the east end of the main building, at an expense of £14,000. This chapel is called by his name, and is the only part of it used as a place of worship. It was here the Westminster Assembly met in 1648, and formed what is called the Westminster Confession of Faith.

It is said this abbey is more than four hundred feet in length; and it is more properly a temple of monuments than a place of worship. Great men are more thought of here than God; and I think there is more *pride* displayed than *piety*.

There were six of us who went in company to visit this place. We entered a door on the east side, and turned to our right, to pass off to the main body of the building. But we were soon arrested in our progress, and called upon to surrender all our canes and umbrellas. When this was done, we were at liberty to walk where we pleased.

The first thing that struck our attention was the magnitude of the room we had entered. Here we stood for some moments, and gazed on the gigantic columns of this vast edifice. We found ourselves surrounded by numerous and splendid monuments of illustrious men. In every direction, statues, busts, and medallions, stand out to view. Here, princes, dukes, nobles and statesmen, poets and warriors, have their statues or their names inscribed. Here are the remains, and a monument, of the unfortunate Major Andre, whose history is associated with our revolutionary struggle. He was executed October 2d, 1780, and in August, 1831, his remains were disinterred, and carried to London and deposited here, by order of his royal highness the Duke of York.

In this vast room, surrounded as we were on all sides by such a multitude of representations of departed greatness and glory, we could scarcely avoid feeling a kind of reverential awe. An almost unbroken stillness reigned throughout, and we seemed involuntarily to step with caution on the marble floor, as if fearful of disturbing the peaceful slumbers of the dead. And our conversation was in suppressed tones, as though we were

afraid of being overheard by those in whose presence we seemed to stand, and concerning whom we spoke.

In the distance, here and there, were seated, or moving very slowly, several venerable-looking men, clothed in long black robes. These were the officers who had charge of this sacred place, and who were employed in conducting visitors through its different parts. After a while, we were notified that these officers were ready to conduct us into the chapel of Henry VII., and other parts of the abbey.

A spacious hall extends some distance before we enter that part of the chapel which is used as a place of worship; and on each side of this hall are rooms of different sizes, which are occupied by marble monuments of the mighty dead. These rooms are also called chapels. The officers who conducted us through these several rooms, announced the names of the kings, queens, dukes, nobles, lords, &c., to whose stately monuments we were introduced; but they did it in such rapid succession as overwhelmed me, so that I could call to mind only a very few of them; like some men's sermons, whose rapid eloquence causes us to forget everything they say.

These monuments were effigies of human form, extended on blocks of granite or marble. Here are kings and queens, warriors and prelates, courtiers and statesmen, curiously chiselled by the art of man, and lying alone in their glory. Some of these monuments afford us proof how false and short-lived is the honor of mankind. In many instances the hand of time, and the rude hand of visitors, had defaced them. These sculptured effigies were designed to represent, as near as they could, the persons when living, in regard to size and features; and they appeared in different positions. They were of full size, and most generally lying on their back, their

head resting on a stone pillow. Their eyes were closed, and their hands piously raised, or pressed together on their breast.

Some were clad in warlike armor, and lying on their side, with the head reclining on the hand, as if reposing a while, after being exhausted in the battle-field. Here, too, were reverend prelates with their crosiers and their mitres, and nobles with their coronets; and, as one observes, it seemed as though the living had all been suddenly touched by the palsyng hand of death, and changed immediately into stone. And one is almost inclined to fear he will be the next to feel the paralyzing touch.

What is more solemn than to be among the sculptured monuments of the mighty dead? To see these noble forms of manhood extended, as if really in the sleep of death, or in the supplications of the dying hour, is calculated to make one feel very solemn. But the monuments with which one is here surrounded, produce mingled emotions. In some cases, around these full-sized human forms are miniature priests and friars on their knees, or bowed with their faces to the earth. And in some cases, there are grotesque figures of quadrupeds, some of which resemble no creature that ever lived on earth, or anywhere else, except in the imagination of men. Such an association of human forms mingled with four-footed things, is calculated to make impressions on the mind partaking of the ludicrous.

But of all the representations which I saw, none made a deeper impression on my mind than that of Lord and Lady Nightingale. These were, if I recollect, in the chapel of St. John and St. Michael. They were sculptured out of the purest marble. The noble lord and his beautiful lady are standing on an oblong block of marble.

The lady, as though fainting, is sinking into her husband's arms. He supports her with his left arm, while his right hand is stretched out, as though he would turn away the stroke of death. On the front side of the marble block on which they stand, there is an opening, about two feet square, and a thick door swung half-way back, having much the appearance of the opening of an iron safe. The opening which is exposed, and the inner side of the door, are painted black. From this black hole, which appears like a dark cavern, a sheeted, fierce-looking skeleton is about half emerged. All but his lower limbs are out, and these are indistinctly seen. His body is twisted nearly one half around, and his shroud has partly fallen from his fleshless frame. His haggard eyes seem fixed on his fainting victim; and in his bony hand he grasps a javelin, which he seems in the act of throwing, aimed at the lady's heart. Her countenance indicates that she is dying; while her husband stands as a noble specimen of manly dignity and tender concern for a beloved wife, who appears exceedingly beautiful in death.

This monument certainly exhibits a very striking representation of death; such an one as I have never seen equalled. It really excites a painful commiseration, and is calculated to show us our entire helplessness when assailed by the King of Terrors. On beholding this, as a certain writer remarks, "one almost imagines that it is a reality, and that he can hear the horrid yell of triumph from the wide-distended jaws of this frightful monster, and the dying groan of this lovely victim."

There is a strange impression made on the mind, by the contrast between what is within these gloomy walls, and what was going on in their immediate neighborhood without. The chapel of Henry VII. is near West-

minster Hall, where the Parliament then met; and it was near five o'clock, the hour when both Houses assemble for business. All was bustle and stir in the street near by. The trampling of horses on the pavements; the rumbling of omnibuses, coaches, and cabs; the constant murmur of the multitude, and the occasional loud and merry laugh, contrasted with the stillness that reigned within this mausoleum of death, were calculated to produce a strange effect on my mind. Our little company seemed to occupy a place between two worlds, the seen and the unseen, the living and the dead.

After having passed about an hour among the mementos of fallen greatness, we went into the chapel proper, where the living assemble to unite in religious services. The time had not quite arrived for evening prayers; so we did not witness this ceremony.

In the centre of this room stands the sepulchre of its royal founder, Henry VII., and we were told that his remains were really deposited here. His effigy and that of his queen lie extended on his tomb, surrounded by a brass railing. The interior of this chapel is decorated by suspended banners, helmets and coats of mail, with scarfs and swords. How much such things inspire devotion, those who resort there for devout purposes are best prepared to say; and whether what passes here daily for worship is really acceptable to God, is best known to Him who knows the heart.

After leaving this part of the Abbey we were taken into the upper part, and shown the place where royal majesty receives the royal diadem. We were shown the ancient oaken chair in which Queen Victoria sat when she received her crown. It is said that all the kings and queens that ever sat on England's throne lived their crown while seated in this chair. The

seat of this chair consists of a stone covered with a board. This celebrated stone was brought from Scone, in Scotland; and it is said that upon this stone sat all the monarchs of Scotland when they were crowned. It was brought to England by Edward I., and tradition says that this is the identical stone which the ancient patriarch, Jacob, set up when on his way to Padan-aram, when it is said he named the place Bethel. Such as are disposed to believe this tradition I suppose are at liberty to do so. I must not, however, forget to tell my readers that I had the honor of being seated in this royal seat for a little season; so they may see how near I came to being made a king.

## THE TOWER OF LONDON.

Strong fortress. — Horse armory. — Royal jewels.

This may be called a fortress or a town with as much propriety as a tower. It is said to have been originally a royal palace, and was made a fortress for the purpose of protecting the sovereign against his own subjects. It covers a large extent of ground, and embraces a vast number of buildings, which are surrounded by a deep ditch and a high wall. It is a depository of arms and trophies taken in war, and contains barracks for soldiers; and here the royal jewels are kept. In former days it was a royal prison. Here Sir Walter Raleigh was a prisoner for several years. I visited the room where he had been confined, and saw the block on which he was executed, and the very axe which severed his head from his body.

I also visited, in company with several others, what is called the Horse Armory, where are many curious things to be seen. Here are figures of horse and foot a

large as life, drawn up in military order to attend a line of kings which are on the other side of the room. Here are coats of mail, of various sizes, called Brigandine jackets. They consist of small bits of steel so artfully quilted over one another as to resist the point of a sword, and yet so flexible that the wearer may bend his body any way, as well as in an ordinary suit of clothes. In viewing these iron coverings of ancient knights, I could not but regard them as cowards instead of heroes, who dared not to appear in the field of battle, except they were covered from head to foot with impenetrable armor. Who, shielded in this way, would not dare to fight?

I did not feel quite as much interest in viewing the Tower of London as I had anticipated; there is too much preparation for war to suit my taste. It was too much associated in its history with scenes of sorrow and of blood. I might have seen the royal jewels and the crowns, which are kept in a dark stone room, enclosed in a glass case, if I had paid sixpence for the sight. But I declined, for I confess I have not much taste for jewels nor for crowns. Nor do I profess much esteem for crowned heads. These things might all be dispensed with, if all men were intelligent and good. I chose to save my sixpence and give it to some of her Majesty's starving poor. And one has frequent occasion to do this in almost every part of the kingdom. If this vast amount of jewelry, and these royal diadems which are treasured here, were disposed of, and the many millions of dollars, that might thus be raised, were given to the poor, it would abundantly supply all the suffering poor throughout Great Britain and Ireland for a long time to come. A nation's wealth is more increased by an intelligent and happy peasantry, than by keeping jewels and crowns for the gaze and admiration of the multitude.

## BRITISH MUSEUM.

The Museum is in Russel street, Bloomsbury. The buildings are disposed around quite a large court, and are in good taste. It owes its origin to Sir Hans Sloane, who bequeathed it to Parliament, on condition that £20,000 were paid to his executors. It was opened to public view in January, 1759. It has since been enriched by many donations and purchases. It is said to contain the greatest collection of curiosities, natural history and books, in the world.

All parts of this Museum, except the library and the coins, may be seen every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, (except during August and September, and in Christmas, Easter and Whitsun weeks,) between the hours of ten and four, without any other difficulty or expense than the visitor entering his name in a book. The trustees alone can grant admission to the library, and this may be obtained by sending an application in writing to the principal librarian. The term of admission does not exceed six months, but may be renewed. They are constantly making additions to this Museum. The Parliament had just made an appropriation of £40,000, and they were then erecting a large and splendid building on the north side of the court.

The practice of giving the common people and all classes free access, for three days each week, is calculated to increase the intelligence of the masses, and in a great measure prevent them from spending their time and money in mischievous amusements. It has become a place of great resort. It is said that its weekly visitors are more than a thousand.

In company with Rev. Mr. Gregory and Mr. Mooney, I spent half a day in viewing its curiosities. One could

spend a week and not be weary. Who can view this amazing variety in the several departments of nature, and not exclaim, "How great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord!"

## EAST INDIA MUSEUM.

This contains a collection of natural history and some productions of art obtained principally from the British possessions in India. Among the works of art, what arrested my attention most was the collection of images of heathen gods. These were of all sorts and sizes, shapes and forms, that can be imagined. Most of them had been the objects of religious worship; some had occupied places in their public temples, but most of them had been family gods, and the gods of individuals. Some were of wood, some were of metal, and some of stone. Many of them were rudely made, but some displayed considerable taste. A gentleman informed me that he had spent several years in the midst of the worshippers of such like idols, and had often witnessed their religious devotions. He said he had seen those, who, in that country, were ranked among the first men in business and talents, engaged in worshipping such like images. He recollects, on one occasion, he saw quite an intelligent man enter a temple, and walk up to a little idol, not larger than his smallest finger, and very reverently bow down before it, and appear very devout. I presume that there were in this Museum not less than a thousand idols. In contemplating these idols and their worshippers, I could not but feel emotions of pity. I thought of the Apostle's inquiry, "Shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died?"

BRISTOL.

WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE.

Introduction to Conference. — Not very good order. — Manner of doing business.

As the Wesleyan Conference was to be held in Bristol, I resolved to visit this place. Bristol lies one hundred and eighteen miles west of London. I took the cars at London, and reached Bristol in about nine hours. We passed through a very rich and beautiful country, dotted here and there with beautiful little villages, and now and then a gentleman's country seat. About twenty miles from London, on our left, we passed Eton College, and Windsor Castle; and further on we passed Oxford, leaving it a few miles on our right. Oxford is the seat of learning where Puseyism has had its origin, and where the high pretensions of prelatical succession have been carried out to their legitimate results, for they have sent several of its learned advocates back to their boasting mother's arms. Oxford is on the most direct way to Rome.

I arrived at Bristol toward evening, and was somewhat disappointed in finding it to be a larger and more beautiful city than I expected to see. It is said to have been built three hundred and eighty years before the Christian era, and has ever been a place of considerable importance, and is so situated as to be a place of great strength. It has some very fine streets, and contains many elegant and spacious buildings. Its churches, chapels, and other public buildings, are indications of great wealth.

On my arrival, I found the Conference was held in Ebenezer Chapel, in Old King street. Next morning I went to the place, and found the preachers assembling. The chapel is about fifty-five feet by eighty-five; the pul-

pit stands about ten feet from the rear, having the communion table and altar behind it, leaving a narrow passage between the altar and rear of the pulpit. Around the pulpit was erected a temporary platform, about four feet high; this would accommodate about twenty persons, and was designed for seating the most distinguished members. Directly in the front of the pulpit was an armed chair for the president. At his left sat the two secretaries at a table, and at his right sat the ex-presidents.

The doors of the chapel being open I went in, and sat down near the door. Soon one of the preachers came to me and inquired who I was. Upon informing him, and expressing a wish to be permitted to sit with them a day or two, he said he would introduce me to Mr. Atherton, the president, who would pass in very shortly. Soon Mr. Atherton came in; he introduced me, and Mr. Atherton took my hand and just inquired whether I was from the Northern or the Southern States. I told him, and he passed on, giving me no opportunity to hand him my letter of introduction from Bishop Janes.

I then sat down; my friend said Mr. Newton, the secretary, would pass soon, and he would introduce me to him. Soon Mr. Newton came in, and he introduced me to him. Mr. Newton said he recollects seeing me at the General Conference, at Baltimore. I gave him my letter of introduction, and told him I should be glad to be introduced to the Conference, and have a seat among them a day or two. He just hastily glanced at my letter, and handed it back, saying he would speak to the president, and passed on.

The president had taken his seat on the platform, and soon Mr. Newton was in his place, and the Conference was opened by singing, reading the Scriptures, and prayer.

During these religious exercises the preachers were coming in, and there was much noise. When they were through, the president spoke a few words, but to me they were inaudible. Then Mr. Newton commenced speaking, and, after a while, I heard him mention my name, and he beckoned to me to come forward. So I started, scarcely knowing whether I was right or wrong, crowding my way along the aisle, till I got alongside the platform, when a brother conducted me around in the rear of the pulpit, and up the steps to the platform.

I supposed the secretary would have introduced me to the Conference, as is usual in our country; but he only turned round, and, pointing to a seat in the rear, desired me to be seated. On observing Dr. Peck, from New York, and Dr. Emory, sitting there, I took a seat beside them, and said to one of them quite softly, "I suppose this must pass for an introduction to the British Conference." He replied, "It is as good an introduction as I have had." I doubt whether one in twenty heard my name announced, or knew who I was, whence I came, or whither I was going. I suppose it was just as well, for I doubt whether one in fifty cared one pin about me.

Thus far, great noise and confusion seemed to prevail; but the president took it into his head to still the noisy elements. He cried at the top of his voice, and in a manner that showed he was really in earnest, "Order!" and comparative order ensued. The whirlwind was hushed to a gentle breeze.

The manner of doing business was a little singular; it was certainly different from anything I had ever seen before.

1st. There was not that order observed, and that attention to business, that I have generally seen. Men

were talking in every direction, so that the speaker could sometimes scarcely be heard.

2d. The president sometimes took part in the discussion, and he would occasionally interrupt the speaker, if he did not like the argument.

3d. It several times happened that some one would interrupt a speaker in the midst of his argument, by inquiring, "How do you know that?" which question the speaker would stop to answer, and then proceed with his argument.

4th. The frequent cry of, "Hear, hear," which was sometimes uttered by perhaps fifty voices, to me was a great annoyance, for they often so drowned the voice of the speaker that I could not hear him at all.

5th. They frequently would respond to the speaker, if he expressed himself in the form of an interrogation; it may be sometimes fifty voices would cry out, "Yes, yes," or, "No, no," as they happened to view the question.

6th. The president did not always put the question, and call for the ayes and noes; but often made up the decision from the ayes and noes that were uttered during the discussion. When these ayes or noes became so frequent and uproarious that the speaker could no longer be heard, the president sometimes would say, "I think the ayes have it," or, "I think the noes have it;" and that arrested all further discussion, and decided the case.

7th. Not unfrequently, the Conference broke out into an uproarious laughter, at some remark of the speaker, and once or twice they clapped and stamped as sinners do at their political meetings in our own country.

I know that much allowance must be made for the customs and usages of the country; but to me it does

seem strange that a body of grave divines should fall into such disagreeable and inconvenient habits. I should think that those who had visited our country, and had seen a more excellent way, would, ere this, have labored to bring about a reform.

There were present, at this Conference, *four hundred* ministers, and they were as fine, healthy, and intelligent looking set of men as I ever looked upon in my life. I shall never see the like again.

#### BATH.

Short visit.—Return to London.

I had intended visiting Ireland and Scotland, and was happy to find that Dr. Peck and Dr. Emory were designing to visit these places. We agreed to take the cars next morning for Bath, in company with each other, and, after visiting this place, to set out for Ireland. I took the cars, supposing we should meet in Bath, but, as I afterward learned, they arrived a little too late, and were left. Not understanding the cause, I supposed they had given up their plan; so, after staying a few hours in Bath, I left it for London.

Bath is a very ancient and a very beautiful city. It is situated on the river Avon, on the side of a narrow valley, bounded by hills on the north. Being on the gentle slope of a hill, we could see almost the entire city, as we passed along the railroad. When this city belonged to the ancient Romans, it was surrounded by a wall ten feet thick and twenty feet high. Here are many very splendid public buildings, which certainly indicate great wealth. My time was so short I could only take a general view of the city.

## EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

Great gathering.—Doctrinal basis.—Eminent men.—Interesting meetings.—Character and tendency.

On Wednesday, August 19th, 1846, the Delegates met in Freemason's Hall, Great Queen street, London, to organize the Evangelical Alliance. There were present about eight hundred gentlemen, ministers and laymen, belonging to different denominations of Christians. They were all Protestants, and were from all parts of Great Britain, Ireland, France, Switzerland, Germany, the United States, and Canada. About three-fourths of them were ministers; sixty-two of them had the title of D. D. These ministers represented about *fifty* denominations of Christians. Some of the distinctions in the denominations to which they belonged, however, were little more than local distinctions. One hundred and twenty-one of these delegates belonged to the Established Church of England, sixty-one of whom were clergymen. One hundred and fifty-nine were Wesleyan Methodists; of these one hundred and eight were ministers. There were sixty-three delegates from America.

After meeting from day to day, for several days, and discussing the various points of Christian doctrine, in an excellent spirit, and much prayer, the Conference agreed, by an almost unanimous vote, to form a Confederation, under the name of "THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE;" adopting the following Doctrinal Basis :

1. The Divine Inspiration, Authority, and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures.
2. The Unity of the Godhead, and Trinity of the persons therein.
3. The Utter Depravity of Human Nature, in consequence of the Fall.

4. The Incarnation of the Son of God. His Work of Atonement for Sinners of Mankind, and his Mediatorial Intercession and Reign.

5. The Justification of the Sinner by Faith alone.

6. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Conversion and Sanctification of the Sinner.

7. The Right and Duty of Private Judgment in the Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

8. The Divine Institution of the Christian Ministry, and the Authority and Perpetuity of the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

9. The Immortality of the Soul, the Resurrection of the Body, the Judgment of the World, by our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Eternal Blessedness of the Righteous, and the Eternal Punishment of the Wicked.

Before this Basis of Doctrines was adopted, the several points contained in it were taken up seriatim, and very carefully examined, and discussed at great length. This was done with great candor, and in a most excellent Christian spirit. Among the most prominent gentlemen who took a part in these discussions, were, Rev. Mr. Bickersteth, Rev. Mr. James, Rev. Mr. Stewart, Rev. Mr. Noel, Rev. Dr. Bunting, Rev. Dr. Alden, Rev. Dr. Peck, Rev. Dr. Schmucker, and Rev. Dr. Beecher, with many more very eminent men, some from the continent, and some from America.

Here I had the pleasure of seeing and hearing many eminent divines, of whom I had heard, and whose writings I had read with great pleasure and profit. And many of them displayed great talents and much piety on this occasion. But some of their voices have since become silent in death.

The meetings were continued during thirteen days. On each day there were two sessions, and on some days

there were three sessions, having one in the evening. To these meetings none were admitted but such as were members of the Alliance. There were, however, several public meetings held in Exeter Hall, to which all were admitted who desired it. A small sum was charged for tickets of admission, for the purpose of meeting the incidental expenses. This hall was said to be capable of seating four thousand persons; and it was generally well filled on these occasions.

The exercises of these public meetings held in Exeter Hall consisted in singing and prayer, with addresses delivered by ministers previously appointed by the committee of arrangements. These addresses did not consist of discussions, so much as remarks on the importance of Christian union, and statements of those points which had been discussed and agreed upon in the meetings of the Alliance; also the means by which this union among Christians might be promoted. Some of these addresses were listened to with great interest, and produced a very excellent state of feeling throughout the great assembly which filled the hall.

On the thirteenth day, after making suitable arrangements to carry out the design of the Alliance, by forming similar confederations in different parts of the world; when the members should have returned to their homes, the meeting finally adjourned *sine die*.

As to the character and tendency of this Evangelical Alliance, I think there can be but one opinion formed by all candid men who carefully examine the subject, and that must be, that this movement among Christians was of a very extraordinary character, and would naturally tend to promote the interests of Christ's kingdom. It was remarkable for brotherly love and harmony of sentiment on the great fundamental doctrines of divine

revelation. This meeting of so many eminent Christians and Christian ministers of Protestants throughout Christendom, will show the world that evangelical Christians agree in all the essentials of Christianity. It will introduce them to an acquaintance with each other, increase their brotherly love, and in some measure do away the objections of infidels.

It is to be feared that all the anticipations and hopes of the friends of this Alliance may not be realized fully, especially in the United States, owing to the great diversity of sects which abound in this land of almost unrestrained liberty. But if it should in any measure diminish the spirit of animosity and jealousy which has heretofore existed among us, it will accomplish a great and glorious object. The formation of this Alliance will, I trust, be a starting-point for progress in this work; a kind of foundation, or doctrinal basis, on which Christians will, in some future day, build a superstructure of Christian union. If an entire union in doctrinal views does not ensue, yet I hope there will be a union in Christian affection and Christian efforts. I believe, in all coming time, the formation of the EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE, in the city of London, in August, 1846, will be looked upon by the church, throughout all Christendom, as a glorious event, which has done much to promote truth and brotherly love. I believe that by this event God will be glorified, and the happiness of the human race will be more or less promoted.

## TEMPERANCE IN ENGLAND.

## WHAT I SAW AND HEARD.

Temperance convention. — The use of wine. — An intoxicated minister. — Reproved. — Dine with Rev. Mr. B. — Mr. Atherton's speech. — Refreshing the fathers.

I had the pleasure of attending the world's *Temperance Convention*. This was held in London the first week in August, 1846. I was not appointed as a delegate, but, obtaining a ticket, I was admitted as a "visitor."

There were present on this occasion a large number of gentlemen, representing the friends of temperance from various parts of the civilized world. It was a meeting of great interest. Several excellent speeches were delivered, and several spirited resolutions were adopted, giving strong indications of the feelings of many great and good men toward the cause of temperance.

But I think the warmest friends of this cause abound most on the American side of the great waters. In England, most of their great men live rather luxuriously, and I had some reason to fear that many professors of religion, and even ministers, were not wholly faultless in this matter. Great use is made of wine and beer.

I never sat down to dinner in company with others, while I was in England, where there were not wine and strong beer before us. While in London, I was invited to preach nine times; and, in every instance, after preaching, I was taken into the vestry, after service, and invited to drink wine, and in one instance repeatedly urged to do it. And this happened in the vestry in City Road Chapel, within two rods of Mr. Wesley's grave.

In the dining-room at Freemason Hall, on one occasion, I dined in company with a large number of minis-

ters of various denominations; during the time, one who sat at my right hand called my attention to a reverend gentleman who sat opposite him. This gentleman seemed to have a good appetite, especially for strong drink. I saw him empty one tumbler of strong beer and three glasses of wine. My friend, who called my attention to him, said that before he called my attention he saw him drink the same quantity. When he had finished his dinner he looked and talked like a drunken man. He pushed his plate from him, and, rising from his chair, and bending over toward me, with his hands resting on the table, addressed himself to me, and said, "You are from America, are you not?" I replied that I was. "Well," said he, "do you see any difference between the people in America and in this country?" I told him I did see some difference. Said he, "What is the difference?" I replied, "I think you drink more wine here than we do in America." At this answer he seemed offended, and, raising both hands, he said, "I understand you are a very wicked people in America; you hold men and women in slavery there. You talk about drinking wine! — what is drinking wine, when compared to slavery? My Saviour is my example; he drank wine, and I follow his example. I am a temperance man, but not a tee-totaler; I think the tee-totalers have done a great deal of mischief in the world."

After delivering this speech, in a manner that indicated that he was quite intoxicated, and knew not what he said, he sat down. I said, "It is true there are many wicked people in America." Seeing I was not disposed to hold any conversation with him, he addressed Rev. Mr. Gregory, who had first called my attention to him, who made very little reply. He then addressed Rev. Mr. Vanzant, who sat next Mr. G., and inquired to what

denomination he belonged. He replied, "To the Reformed Dutch Church." "Reformed Dutch!" said he; "I did not know that the Dutch could reform." "O yes, they can," said Mr. Vanzant, "and I hope you will reform before long."

While this conversation was going on, Rev. Mr. Arthur, who sat nearly opposite to me, and not far from him, said to me, "I hope, sir, you will not consider this a fair specimen of English politeness." I replied that I certainly should not; I was too well acquainted with the English character to do so; and said I thought his rudeness could be accounted for by observing the decanter of wine which was near him. He seemed to overhear my remark, and said, "I have been a minister thirty years, and was never before reproved for drinking wine." Mr. Arthur very pleasantly replied, "The gentleman did not design to reprove you." "Yes, he did," said he; "for I asked him a general question, and he gave me a particular answer. My Saviour has set me the example of drinking wine." Said Mr. Arthur, "Our Saviour has also set us the example of meekness." "I know that," said he; "and I am meek." Whether I designed to reprove him or not, I believe all who sat around him, and whose attention was called to his conduct and conversation, thought he deserved a severe reproof. When he arose from the table, he crowded along to me, and said he wanted to talk with me, and inquired if I believed Christ died for all men. I told him I did not wish to talk on that subject just now, but inquired his name. Instead of answering my inquiry, he said, "What is your name?" I told him my name; he then told me his, and the denomination to which he belonged. I immediately walked away. A few days after, he came and spoke to me, and I reproved him

seriously. He denied that he was intoxicated; but I told him I was not the only one who said he was, but all the gentlemen who were at the table, and observed his conduct, were of the same opinion; we observed what a free use you made of wine. He went away, appearing quite offended. This reverend gentleman was not a Wesleyan.

But I fear that even the Wesleyan ministers are not all free from faults in this matter. I believe a large portion of them are in the habit of using wine as a beverage. I have seen several use it, and heard several vindicate the practice.

I was invited to dine at the house of Rev. Mr. B., a Wesleyan, with several American brethren. At the table, Mr. B. inquired what kind of wine I preferred. I replied I did not drink any kind, but would take a glass of water. He desired to know why I did not drink wine; I made but little reply, but he urged me to tell. So I told him plainly that my principal reason was that it made me drunk. "Perhaps," said he, "you drink too much." I said, "All the difference, whether I drink much or little, is — if I drink a good deal, I am a good deal drunk, and if I drink a little, I am a little drunk; and I do not like to be drunk even a little, for I find that when wine is in, wit is out; — and I will appeal to the ladies, whether they think I have any wit to spare." This remark excited a little amusement. But Mr. B. did not choose to let the subject drop; he remarked that wine and beer were not ardent spirits, as were brandy and gin, but they were of domestic manufacture. I told him I supposed he knew that *distillation* did not create alcohol; that this was produced by fermentation, and of course that the intoxicating principle is in *beer* and *wine*, as really as it is in *gin* and *brandy*, — all the difference is, that it is in a less proportion. And I further remarked,

that, as far as my observation had extended, intoxication produced by wine and beer was precisely the same in its character as that produced by gin and brandy. I then related the circumstance of the drunken minister that I had seen a few days before, to illustrate the fact. I told him, for aught I could see, this man looked as bad, and talked as foolish, as if he had become drunken with brandy, or anything else.

When I had finished my temperance lecture, which I had been reluctantly forced to deliver, he said no more about wine, but in a good-humored way said, "You deserve a cup of coffee for that deliverance." I replied, "That I will accept very thankfully, for although it exhilarates a little, it will not intoxicate." While I sipped my favorite beverage, a gentleman at the table remarked, that he heard Rev. Mr. Arthur relate the circumstance about the drunken minister to which I had alluded; he said that he was present.

I am sure, from what I saw and heard while in England, that too many of our members and ministers, as well as others, are far behind the times in their views and feelings on the subject of temperance. As a further proof of this, I will mention what took place at the Conference in my presence, at Bristol. Mr. Atherton, the president of the Conference, arose in his place, and said that he was sorry to say he had never known so many insolent things sent up to any Conference as had been sent up to that by the tee-totalers. "They make us," said he, "a great deal of trouble. Not content with having their own way, they undertake to direct us, and tell us what is our duty. They plainly show that they are not of us. I wish they would take themselves away from us. They are at liberty to leave us, and go where they can be better pleased. I think," said he, "there is

no body of ministers who are so much troubled by them as we are." Upon this, not waiting for the president to finish his speech, or, if he had finished, he had not taken his seat, Dr. Beaumont sprang up and said, "Perhaps there is no body of ministers that has assailed and provoked them as much as we have." Here the president interrupted the doctor, and replied, "We do not design to provoke them, but we act in self-defence." I afterwards inquired what the president meant by the assault of the tee-totallers, to which he alluded, and was told that many brethren from Preston and elsewhere, who had become tee-totallers, had sent up petitions and remonstrances on the subject of temperance, asking the coöperation of all the preachers in the great temperance movement, and requesting, especially, that they would abstain from wine and beer as a beverage.

Another instance occurred. I was sitting beside Rev. Dr. Peck on the rear seat of the platform, when he whispered to me to look down behind me; so I turned round, and saw a man passing between the platform and the communion table, bearing a waiter in his hands; he appeared to have come out of the vestry, and was going across to the opposite door which leads into the sexton's house, or the parsonage. I supposed it was the sexton. On the waiter which he bore, there were, I should think, not less than twenty-five wine-glasses, all of which were empty, except one. Just as I first saw him, he stopped, and a minister, who sat within the altar by the communion-table, took the glass which had wine and drank it, and set back the glass, and the sexton passed on to the opposite door. I learned, upon inquiry, that the committee who made out the preachers' appointments for the ensuing year were at that time occupying the vestry, engaged in their appropriate work,

and I suppose the wine had been carried in as refreshment for these venerable fathers, to strengthen them in the performance of their arduous labors. But of this I know nothing.

From the foregoing the reader will perceive that I was an eye and ear witness to some things in England, in regard to temperance, which look and sound a little queer on this side of the great waters. Wine and beer seem to be a source of great delight to the English people. They scarcely know how to live without these luxuries. Several times I had to plead the cause of temperance in private circles, and twice I ventured to allude to the subject very plainly in my public discourses. A man feels much embarrassed to decline drinking wine when sitting at the table where all others of the company drink it. It seems like administering a reproof to one's friends; and yet I think a conscientious temperance man will feel bound to do it. I am happy to say I did not see an American drink a glass of wine while I was in England.

## SABBATHS IN LONDON.

Preach in several places. — Hear preaching. — A Scotch minister's prayer.

I spent six Sabbaths in London, and attended public worship in several different places. The first Sabbath I attended at the City Road chapel. Here the morning service of the Established Church was read, as is the case in most of the Wesleyan chapels in London. The service is used by our people, without much alteration; however, for a few years past, they omit to pray for Bishops as a distinct order in the ministry; they pray for all the ministers of the Gospel, instead of "Bishops and other clergy." I suppose our Wesleyan brethren in England think as

we do here, namely, that "Bishop" is an *office* in the church, and not a distinct *order*. This is the light in which Mr. Wesley viewed it, and accordingly, in "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in the United States," which he prepared, he omitted the term "Bishops," and substituted "Ministers."

The reading of the service occupied about three quarters of an hour, and was attended with the responses of a regular clerk. In this chapel the service is seldom read by the man who delivers the sermon, but by a man who is employed to read the service, administer baptism, and bury the dead.

Only a few besides the Sabbath school and their teachers were present, when the reading of the service commenced, but the congregation were all in and quietly seated by the time the reader was through. Just before the service closed, the preacher came in from the vestry, and went into the pulpit and kneeled down, and remained on his knees until the benediction was pronounced. After a few moments, he gave out a hymn; this was followed by prayer and singing again. Then followed the sermon, as is usual among us. I could not learn the minister's name who preached that morning, but he gave us an excellent sermon. It certainly was among the best that I heard in London. In the evening, at the request of Mr. Loomis, the superintendent, I attempted to preach in Jewin street chapel, a house which had formerly belonged to the Unitarians.

On the second Sabbath, I went in the morning to hear the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, who has since left the Establishment. He preached an excellent sermon. He appeared to be a man of good talents and of an excellent spirit. In the evening I attempted to preach in City

Road chapel. I confess I felt some strange feelings when I found myself standing in the same pulpit where Mr. Wesley had stood, and preaching to some who had heard Mr. Wesley in the same place.

The third Sabbath I attended worship at an Independent chapel, and heard Rev. Mr. Binney, a man of considerable reputation. In the afternoon I heard a Wesleyan, in Jewin street chapel. The brother who preached was said to be the most eloquent and popular man of all our ministers in London, at that time. But I was not pleased; there seemed to me to be too much puff and swell to suit my notion of true eloquence. In the evening I endeavored to preach in the chapel in Wilderness-row.

The fourth Sabbath I attended Dr. Leischild's chapel in the morning, and heard Dr. Patten, of New York. In the afternoon I heard a minister of the Establishment, and in the evening I attempted to preach in the Wesleyan chapel, in Great Queen street, to Dr. Beaumont's congregation. This is said to be the largest Methodist chapel in London.

The fifth Sabbath I listened to a minister of the Free Scotch Church, in the City Road chapel, in the morning. I thought the Rev. Doctor was not much accustomed to preach to any but his own people. In the evening I attempted to preach in an Independent chapel, in Shoreditch, near City Road, of which Rev. Mr. Mannering is the pastor. I had an excellent time in attempting to preach on this occasion.

The last Sabbath that I was in London, I attended the communion in Rev. Mr. Noel's church, in compliance with an invitation given by Mr. Noel to all the members of the Alliance. In the afternoon I went to hear Rev. Dr. Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta, who had returned

to England to solicit aid to build a cathedral in India. His discourse was certainly a great puff. In the evening I went to Hoxon street chapel, where I attempted to preach. Here I enjoyed a very precious season, and I believe good impressions were made on the hearts of the people.

After closing my discourse, I made some allusion to my intention to embark, in a day or two, for my native land, and requested to be remembered in prayer. As soon as I had done, a gentleman who sat not far from the pulpit arose and stepped out into the aisle, and desired to speak. As no one said anything, I told him I presumed there were no objections. He then went on to say that he was not a Wesleyan, but was a minister of the Free Scotch Church; that he was an entire stranger there; that he providentially came in to hear God's word, and had been greatly blessed. But he said that his special object in speaking was to invite all Christians present to unite in prayer for the brother who was about to embark for his native land. "We all know," said he, "the perils of the mighty deep, and we all know that God holds the winds and the waves under his control. And," said he, "we know, also, that God heareth prayer. Now, therefore, let us all bow down before the Lord, and unite in commanding our brother to his special care." Upon this, he fell on his knees in the place where he stood, and offered up a most fervent prayer. I shall long remember the ardor of his soul, and the strong expressions of Christian affection toward me, and of unwavering faith in God. "Lord," said he, "we earnestly entreat thee to take care of our dear brother, and bring him safely to his native land, and to the embraces of his friends. Hold the stormy winds, O Lord, in thine own hands, and control the

raging waves. Take care of every plank of the ship in which he shall sail, until he shall arrive at the desired haven." Thus he prayed and wrestled, like a man who had power with God, and who had been accustomed to prevail. And there seemed to be a corresponding feeling through all the house, which was evinced by several audible *amens*. I do not recollect that I ever heard a more fervent prayer offered in my behalf in all my life. If the dear man of God had foreseen the terrible equinoctial gale we had to encounter in a few days, he could not have prayed more appropriately or more fervently. While he was praying, I felt an assurance thrill through my spirit that I should most certainly reach my home; and from that moment, I must say, I felt less dread of the voyage than I had before. I mention the foregoing circumstance because I shall have occasion to refer to it again, in noticing the terrible storm which overtook us, through which we were graciously preserved.

Besides preaching six times on Sabbath evenings, I also attempted to preach three times on week evenings, — once in City Road chapel, once in Jewin-street chapel, and once in the chapel in Wilderness Row. In all these places I enjoyed considerable liberty. I felt as though I was among Christian brethren, where there were views and feelings entertained corresponding with my own.

## A LONDON SKETCH.

London may be regarded as the metropolis of the world. It is situated on the north side of the river Thames, at the head of navigation. It is something more than seven miles in length, and from two to four or five miles in width. Its population is very dense, and is calculated at present as amounting to 2,352,000. There is an immense amount of wealth possessed by its inhabitants, and there are vast multitudes who are exceedingly poor.

This city is very ancient; it is thought to have existed more than *two thousand* years. It was probably built by the ancient Romans. This city has been visited twice by the plague; in the first instance, 30,000 persons died, and in the second not less than 68,000. In 1668, two years after the last plague, a terrible fire broke out, which continued to rage four days, and is said to have destroyed 13,200 houses, and 86 churches and chapels. The loss of property is said to have amounted to more than £250,000,000.

A large portion of the streets of London are quite narrow, but they are generally kept remarkably clean. In West End, as it is called, which has been more recently built, the streets are wide, and the buildings are in more modern style, and generally very elegant. In general, the houses have rather an antiquated appearance, and, owing to the great use of bituminous coal for fuel, and to the humidity of the atmosphere, there is rather a dingy appearance to the buildings throughout the city.

The east part of the city is remarkable for its basins for the accommodation of shipping. The water is let into these basins, at the time of high tide, by means

of locks. Around these are immense store-houses, in which very much business is transacted.

In all parts of the city public squares abound, in which there are, generally, more or less monuments erected, and around which there are, usually, very magnificent buildings.

It is said that the effective force of the police of London amounts to about 3,500. More or less of these officers are to be found at their respective posts, both night and day; and they preserve most admirable order. I know not that a single fire occurred in any part of the city during all the time I was there.

Although there are, no doubt, a great many good people in this great city, there is a vast amount of wickedness here; perhaps there are but few cities on earth more wicked than London. There certainly is not a city that sins against greater light. It is said that the whole number of places of worship is only about 800. Admitting that these, upon an average, will each accommodate 1000 persons, there would be accommodations for little more than one third of its inhabitants. But these places of worship are seldom all filled, some of them not much more than half filled with worshippers. There are, no doubt, more than a *million* persons in London who never enter any place of worship, neither church nor chapel.

It is said that in London the births which occur average weekly about *fourteen hundred*, and the deaths not far from one thousand. I came across the following curious statistics respecting the deaths which have occurred in England and Wales in eighteen years. This, it is thought, might also apply to the proportion of relative ages of those who die in London. From 1813 to 1830, there were registered as buried in England and

Wales, 3,938,496 persons. The following table gives the ages, and will serve to show our liability to death :

Under 1 yr. of age, - - -	778,083	60 years, - - - - -	48,274
1 year, - - - - -	266,248	70 " " " " "	53,958
2 " " " " "	154,004	80 " " " " "	45,607
3 " " " " "	94,668	90 " " " " "	11,178
10 " " " " "	22,187	100 " " " " "	707
20 " " " " "	81,286	105 " " " " "	101
30 " " " " "	81,127	110 " " " " "	18
40 " " " " "	30,511	120 " " " " "	8
50 " " " " "	88,527	124 " " " " "	1

There are quite too many people in London for the comfort of its inhabitants, and they are very rapidly increasing every year. The government has made some attempts to prevent the further enlargement of the city; but such attempts are wholly in vain, such are the facilities which it offers for the attainment of wealth and the enjoyment of pleasure.

## ENGLAND, — FAREWELL.

September 1, 1846.

We left London on Tuesday morning, September 1st, just five weeks from the day on which we had arrived. There were three of us in company, Rev. George Webber, Rev. O. Gregory, and myself, who took the cars at six o'clock, and reached Portsmouth in about four hours. Here we found the ship Hendrick Hudson, which had sailed from London on Saturday. It was lying at anchor, awaiting our arrival. While waiting for the captain's orders for all to go on board, let me pen down a few thoughts about England, and bid her farewell.

England is a remarkable part of the world. From all I have seen, and heard, and read, I am prepared to acknowledge this. Its soil is fertile, and it abounds in

mineral wealth ; its atmosphere is very mild, and its seasons are remarkably productive. Its population is numerous, and its government is very powerful ; although monarchical, there is none in all Europe so liberal and free. There is no country in all Europe, of its size, which possesses so much wealth, or where there is so much virtue, intelligence, and enterprise. She sitteth as a queen upon many waters, and upon some part of her possessions the sun always shines, for they extend nearly around the globe. Her institutions form a mighty bulwark for the protection of religion, and her influence is felt more or less in nearly all the nations of the earth. There is no part of Europe where religious liberty is enjoyed as in England ; nor does any country number as many scholars and celebrated divines. Her history of former days has done her great honor in this respect, and the present generation of her sons do no dis-honor to the past.

There is no part of Europe where literature and science are so accessible as here, or where the people avail themselves of their advantages in these respects, more than here. And there is no part of the world where so much is done every year to spread the glorious gospel abroad, and bless mankind with its light. It is, to a great extent, the radiating centre of the moral world. In England, nearly all denominations of Christians harmonize in this glorious enterprise. Nowhere under the wide spread canopy of heaven is a more noble specimen given of the benevolence of Christianity, or the unity of its friends.

But to this picture, so honorable to England, there are many shades which cannot but be seen. Here, also, are ignorance and sin. Her citizens do not all avail themselves of their advantages to become *wise and good*.

- It is recorded that in one year *thirty thousand* were arraigned for criminal offences, and that nearly *nine tenths* of them were illiterate; *a tenth* only could read and write. The wealth of England is, to a great extent, in the hands of the aristocracy; in their hands is the power. Generally, among the rich and the great, luxury and sin abound. It is to be feared that among this class there are but few who fear God, and many are very wicked; many profess religion for the sake of obtaining office.

The government of England is exceedingly expensive, and of course the taxes are exceedingly heavy. Although the poor have but little property on which to be taxed, yet the enormous duties on all their imports make the necessaries of life exceedingly high. A government so expensive and extravagant must require taxes too intolerable to be borne. How can the taxes be otherwise when the royal family receive annually from the treasury of the nation nearly *one million and a half of dollars*; and some of her majesty's public officers must receive such enormous sums? It is said that in 1814 the House of Commons voted to the Duke of Wellington £400,000; and at another time £4,000 a year for three lives; and at another time, as a donation, they gave him £3,400,000; and for his services while in India, they gave him £20,000 per annum. This affords us a specimen of the extravagance of England.

But, England, I am now about to leave thee for my native land. We shall soon receive orders to embark; our noble ship will soon spread her canvas to the breeze, and thy beautiful shores and headlands will only appear in the distance. With all thy wealth and thy poverty, thy virtues and thy crimes, thy glory and thy shame, I wish thee well. For the sake of the enlightening influ-

ence thou exertest among the nations ; and for the sake •  
of the learning, virtue, truth, and piety, which exist  
among thy people, I wish thee well.

However, let me say, before I quite lose sight of thy shores, that what has been, in the history of nations, may be again. Babylon once said, "I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow." The merchants of the earth waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies ; but it was said, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen!" The battle is not always to the strong ; the Lord raiseth up one, and putteth down another. If no special judgments overtake thee for thy sins, there are elements now at work within thee, which, in time not far distant, may rob thee of thy glory. Thy enterprising sons have found countries far more flourishing than thine own. America and Australia may yet outstrip thee. The United States are now next to thee in resources and in power, and may soon excel. The Anglo-Saxon race will, no doubt, conquer and rule the world ; but Great Britain may not be the seat of empire. It is most probable that it may be created elsewhere. I predict no conquest over thee, or that any special calamity will befall thee ; but thy government may be confined to thine own shores. My beloved country, for which I am about to embark, may yet become the greatest country on the face of the earth ; and thy dominions on the other side of the globe may in some future day be enlightened and wholly independent of thy control. But whatever may be thy future history, thy weal or woe, I now embark for my native land, and sincerely wish thee well.

## RETURN VOYAGE.

Cheering prospects. — Terrible tempest. — Trust in God. — Religious exercises. — Safe arrival.

We embarked about two o'clock, P. M., and soon our sails were all spread before a pleasant breeze, and our ship moving toward our native land. There were on board about twenty cabin and fifty steerage passengers. Rev. Dr. Wilson, Rev. Mr. Osborn, Rev. Mr. Webber, and Rev. Mr. Gregory, were on board; being five of us who professed to be ministers, we promised ourselves much comfort in associating with each other during our voyage; and we were not disappointed.

When we had been on our way about a week, and had progressed about five hundred miles, we met an English ship from New York, homeward bound. She hoisted a signal, and was answered from ours. She hung out a black board, on which was marked, with chalk, her latitude and longitude, and our captain did the same. On comparing the reckoning of the two vessels, there was, if I recollect, only about *three miles* difference in their reckonings of latitude. Such is the perfection at which the science of navigation has arrived, and such was the skill of these two commanders. This circumstance served to inspire the passengers with confidence in the skill of Capt. Moore.

For about three weeks we had pleasant weather, and a fair wind was bearing us rapidly toward our homes. We began to hope we should reach New York in one week more. But we were destined to be disappointed. On the morning of the nineteenth day we were met by the equinoctial gale. It came so suddenly, that, before the sails could all be taken in, two of them were torn into atoms. The raging foe came from the south-west;

it struck us directly in our face, just as we had passed the banks of Newfoundland. Our ship was soon put in her storm undress, to meet the dreadful gale. In spite of every effort, we were driven a great distance from our course.

The motion of our ship, under the influence of the storm and the surges which rolled beneath us, was really frightful. And who can describe the appearance of the troubled deep? or who can forget the horrid moan of the stormy wind as it rushed through the rigging of the ship? The creaking of the timbers, the howling of the winds, and the tremendous roar of the surrounding waves, defy all attempts at description. These things were wonderfully calculated to illustrate the power and majesty of God —

“Who rides upon the stormy sky,  
And calms the roaring seas.”

Here we were, driven by a hurricane over the fathomless depths, leaping from surge to surge on a few planks nailed together, in a state of perfect helplessness. What could have saved us from ruin and death, had we been dashing toward a reef of rocks, or had we come in contact with another ship? This scene exceeded anything any of us had ever witnessed before. The captain said he had crossed the Atlantic no less than *one hundred and forty times*, but he had never encountered a worse storm.

To one who had courage enough to go on deck and look abroad, the sight was awfully grand. I passed up the gangway once with much difficulty, cast one glance on the scene, and immediately returned. I saw no living being on the deck, except the man who was tied fast at the helm. The entire ocean lay before us, one vast



sheet of rolling and boiling foam, with here and there a huge billow carrying his head higher than his fellow for a moment, as though it was bent on our destruction. But just as it seemed ready to overwhelm us, it would sink down, as though an invisible hand had suddenly seized it, or some controlling power had said, "Thus far only; here thou shalt give thy raging o'er." Where there would be a swelling mountain this moment, there would be a valley the next.

This war of elements continued from about half-past five in the morning until about nine o'clock in the evening. When it first began I could not but feel some uneasiness in reflecting on our utter helplessness and what might be our fate. But, recollecting that our heavenly Father held the elements under his control, I became quite calm. Rev. Mr. Gregory occupied the same state-room with me, and we spent the day in quiet meditation and prayer. The prayers of my brethren at Hoxon-street Chapel, which had been offered for me the Sabbath evening before I embarked, which were led by the Scotch minister, often came to my mind, and I was kept in perfect peace, trusting in God. I was filled with an assurance that that prayer would be heard, and I should safely reach my home. From eight o'clock in the morning until noon, I did not once rise from my seat; and I sat equally undisturbed five hours in the afternoon. About noon we shipped a sea, which seemed for a few moments to threaten to engulf us all; but the ship soon righted-up again. About nine o'clock in the evening, finding myself quite weary, I got into my berth, committed myself to divine protection, and fell asleep, and, although it may seem strange, I slept quite well through the remainder of the night. The next morning the weather was tolerably calm.

In the forenoon of this day, which was Sabbath, I preached on the after deck; and in the evening I was requested to preach to the passengers in the steerage. I preached twice to the cabin passengers, and twice to those in the steerage. And once I gave the steerage passengers an address on emigration. Three of the other ministers preached, also, during the voyage. When we arrived at New York, I received a very respectful note, signed by more than twenty names of steerage passengers, expressing their thanks to me for my labors among them during the passage.

We arrived in sight of land near the close of a somewhat unpleasant day, and came to anchor off Sandy Hook some time in the evening, and waited until morning for a steamer to tow us into the harbor. During the night, the clouds had cleared away, and the morning sun showed us a most beautiful sight. To me, nature never appeared more lovely. To us who had been so long out of sight of land, the bay of New York seemed almost like a scene gotten up by the power of enchantment.

We arrived at New York on the fourth day of October, just thirty-five days after we left Portsmouth. It was on Sabbath morning, just as the bells were ringing for church. I immediately left the ship, and soon found myself mingling with the worshippers of God in John-street Church, in the very place where, in 1814, I took upon me my ordination vows. I think I never felt more thankful for any temporal mercies that I ever received, than I did that day for my safe return. The language of my heart was —

“I’ve returned to the land of milk and honey,  
Hallelujah !”

I joined with my Christian friends in prayer and praise with much pleasure.

## SUPERNUMERARY.

1847, 1848.

*Book of Discipline. — Revisal. — Rule on temperance. — New arrangement.*

Although my visit to England had improved both my health and my spirits, it had made me no younger; I therefore thought it not best to take an effective relation. So, at my request, I was continued a supernumerary. But in this relation I did not remain idle. I generally preached every Sabbath, sometimes assisting brethren if unwell, and sometimes supplying their places if they had occasion to be absent.

At the General Conference of 1848, two events took place with which I had something to do, which gave me some pleasure. The events to which I allude are the *revisal* and the *new arrangement* of our Book of Discipline.

1. Methodism, in its peculiar characteristics, is a creature of Providence. Its *doctrines* and *moral discipline* are derived from the sacred Scriptures, and, therefore, will never need any revising; but some of its peculiar features, and some of its provisions for carrying its doctrines and moral rules into operation, had their origin in the wisdom of man, under the influence of the peculiar circumstances by which as a people we were surrounded. Some of these features and rules must necessarily be varied as circumstances may vary from time to time.

The General Conference, composed of delegates from all the Annual Conferences, constitutes the highest legislative as well as judicial body in the M. E. Church. This body chooses and authorizes our general superintendents, and this body makes and amends our rules of discipline, by which our church is governed. At its

sessions for many years past, it has had a committee appointed, called the "Committee of Revisal," to whom have been referred such amendments as have been deemed necessary. This committee would report their opinion for the action of the Conference.

After the temperance reform commenced in our country, Dr. Fisk introduced a resolution to restore Mr. Wesley's rule on temperance as it was originally, which forbids "using intoxicating liquors, except in cases of extreme necessity." This met with opposition from a certain quarter, and was not introduced until 1848. At the same time an amendment was adopted, making provision for the carrying out the rule of Mr. Wesley.

This amendment I prepared in a resolution in 1840, when the General Conference was held in Baltimore; but the Conference was so taken up with other matters, there was no chance to offer it. However, in 1844 it was again introduced, seconded by Rev. E. R. Ames, of Indiana Conference. The resolution was referred to the Committee on Revisals, who reported favorably to its adoption, and, after some discussion, its further consideration was postponed until the report of the Committee on Temperance should be presented. The Committee on Temperance, in their report, recommended its adoption; but this part of the report being opposed from a certain quarter, it was laid on the table, and never called up again.

However, at the General Conference of 1848, I again introduced the resolution, and it was again referred to the Committee on Revisals, who reported favorably to its adoption, and it was adopted by an almost unanimous vote. This rule is found on page 92 of the new arrangement of the Book of Discipline, in which the "buying, selling, or using intoxicating liquors, as a beverage," is

prohibited. This prohibition is in the second class of offences for which a person, after he has been suitably admonished, may be expelled, if he does not amend.

Perhaps it was fortunate that it was laid on the table in 1844, for there would have been strong opposition made to it by certain men who were then with us. They had generally opposed the restoration of Mr. Wesley's rule, for reasons best known to themselves; and they no doubt would have opposed this if it had been called up. Its failure would have been no honor to our church.

During the interim between 1844 and 1848, the question of restoring Mr. Wesley's rule had been again sent around to the Annual Conferences, and, certain men no longer standing in its way, it was at this Conference restored in a constitutional manner. Now the rule I had proposed seemed somewhat necessary, 1st, in order to explain Mr. Wesley's rule; and, 2d, to provide a specific rule by which to enforce his. Mr. Wesley's rule prohibited buying or selling spirituous liquors, unless in cases of extreme necessity. The design of it was only to prevent the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and to discontinue its use, even in medicine, except in cases of extreme necessity. But nothing is said in the rule about *beverage*; and, according to the letter of it, alcohol may not be used in the arts, nor bought nor sold for this purpose. A rule so indefinite and defective would need an explanation. This rule on page 92 explains it, by prohibiting the buying it for a beverage, selling it for a beverage, or using it for a beverage.

And this rule was needed to enable the administrator to carry Mr. Wesley's rule into effect. Here, buying, or selling, or using, intoxicating liquors, is ranked among a class of infractions of moral rules by which our conduct must be regulated. The offender in this particular must

be reproved, and if he acknowledge his fault and amend his ways, well; but if he continue to offend, he must be brought before the church, tried, and expelled.\*

2. Our Book of Discipline, like Methodism itself, is also a creature of Providence. Rules were introduced into it, from time to time, as circumstances and occasions called for them, and it often happened that, on this account, new rules were not put in their most appropriate place. In consequence of this, the book had become so jumbled up and void of order, that in some instances it was exceedingly difficult to turn to any specific rule when it was wanted.

This defect in the arrangement had been seen and deplored, but no efforts to remedy it were effectual, until the Troy Conference appointed a committee to "prepare a new arrangement of our Book of Discipline." This com-

\* This rule introduces no *new* term of membership, for "drinking spirituous liquors, except in cases of necessity," has always been forbidden by our General Rules. Nor is it an *unscriptural* rule. The precise language of prohibition contained in this rule may not be found *explicitly* in the Bible, but the spirit of it is there. In many cases, — perhaps most generally, — the Bible lays down general principles, and leaves it to us to apply them to particular cases. This is the principle on which we often have to act, and on which all ecclesiastical bodies are obliged to go in maintaining church discipline. On any other principle, how could we in certain cases determine what is right or wrong? Or how could the church excommunicate its members, for attending balls, or theatres, for card-playing or horse-racing, or doing many other things that are evidently sinful, although not *explicitly* prohibited in the Bible? These things may not be specifically, — that is, in so many words, — proscribed in the Bible; but they must be regarded as utterly inconsistent with Christian character, because they are infractions on what the Bible requires. And is not buying, selling, or using intoxicating liquors as a beverage, equally so? Surely, if the Bible forbids us to injure ourselves, or our fellow-creatures, it forbids what will inevitably work such an injury, — it forbids using intoxicating liquors as a beverage. A man has no right to put the intoxicating cup either to his neighbor's mouth, or to

mittee prepared such an arrangement, and reported it to the next Conference. This arrangement was unanimously approved by the Conference, and recommended to the ensuing General Conference; and the Conference also requested Bishop Janes to present it for inspection to several annual Conferences, for their approval and recommendation. With this request the bishop very kindly complied.

At the General Conference of 1848, this subject was referred to a special committee, and the committee reported an arrangement not differing much from the one prepared by the Troy Conference. This "new arrangement" was unanimously adopted, and ordered to be published at our book-room, under the supervision of a special committee.

The result of all this has been, that our Book of Discipline has undergone a very great improvement in its order of arrangement. This is an event in which I greatly rejoice, and I am glad I had the honor to contribute my mite toward bringing it about.

I trust I have not been altogether useless to the church, while holding a supernumerary relation. In my advanced time of life, if I cannot contribute to the interests of the church in one way, I may nevertheless do it in another. If I can no longer go out with my brethren in the regular work of itinerancy, and help them let down the net, I may nevertheless stand on the shore and assist in holding the land-line and drawing in the net; and I may, perhaps, help a little occasionally in gathering the fishes into vessels and taking care of them.

## POULTNEY DISTRICT.

1849.

Regularly employed. — An incident. — State of Methodism. — Low state of religion.

Troy Conference held its session this year at Sandy Hill, and, at my own request, I continued to hold the relation of supernumerary. After a short time it was found necessary, in order to carry out the plan we had adopted relative to our academy, that Rev. Joseph Ayers, presiding Elder of Poultney district, should be employed as an agent. This could be, if I would supply his place on the district. To this arrangement I consented, and at the joint request of the Board of Trustees and District Stewards, this arrangement was made by Bishop Heddingley. So, in the month of October, I took charge of the district for the remainder of the conference year.

The state of Methodism, in Poultney, is somewhat different from what it was when I first preached here, in 1810. At that time there was no Methodist society in the town, and strong prejudices existed against us. The following incident will furnish a specimen. I got an appointment to preach in the east village, and, after preaching, Elder K. sent a request to have me call on him, at the house of Judge B. So I called, and found quite a number of gentlemen gathered, and Elder K. ready for battle. He inquired what kind of doctrine I preached. I told him I usually preached that men must repent and be converted. Said he, "Do you believe in the doctrine of human depravity?" I told him I did. "In total depravity?" said he. I told him I did, if by total depravity is meant that a sinner has nothing good in him by nature, and is totally unable of himself to do anything good; but I believed God had not left man in this state, but had given him gracious assistance. Here [redacted] interrupted me by saying, "We do not want to hear

any explanation how you believe it. You say you hold to total depravity — that is enough. You go about telling totally depraved creatures to do something. You are an inconsistent man; you don't understand your Bible." I attempted to explain, but he would not hear a word from me, but charged me with preaching false and dangerous doctrine. I attempted to defend myself, but he would not hear me. So I sat in silence, and let him go on as he liked.

After a while he made a little pause, and I proposed this question: "Cannot a sinner repent before he is born again and made a Christian?" He seemed not to hear my question, but kept on in his severe remarks about what he called the errors of the Methodists. Every time I could get a chance, I would repeat my question; but he paid no attention to it, until Judge B. called his attention to it. He then said, "No! — a sinner is like a milkweed; until the weed is cut in two, no milk can flow from it. Repentance is a holy exercise, and none but a holy being can put forth a holy exercise."

As he said this, a gentleman in the company, who was one of his hearers, arose and addressed him very emphatically. "Elder K.," said he, "I am astonished at your answer. I advise you to go to heaven,— there is the place for you to preach. If sinners cannot repent until they are holy, why are you here preaching repentance? I am sure you can be of no use to us here." After this short speech, he left the house. A moment of silence ensued, and I exclaimed "Amen!" and made my bow, and went out also. I was told afterward that Judge B. told the elder he had done his cause more harm than I could have done it.

But times have greatly changed in Poultny since 1810. Our doctrines are better understood, brotherly

love prevails here among Christians, and Elder K. has long since gone to his rest. We have had, for many years, a good society in the west part of the town, and a good church has been erected. This is the seat of the Troy Conference Academy.

Poultney district embraced a part of what was formerly called Middlebury district, as also Champlain, on which I had travelled twenty years before. Here, then, I found myself among my former friends, even a few of whom I had known as early as 1810. But great changes had taken place through all these parts, since I first travelled here. Our societies have sprung up in every direction, and churches have been built in nearly every town.

But some changes had taken place since I travelled here twenty years ago, especially in that part of the district which lies in Vermont. There remained but few appointments which deserved the name of circuits. In order to accommodate those places where our people had erected churches with preaching once or twice on the Sabbath, the work had been cut up into little stations. By this arrangement, however, the charges in many instances had been so weakened that they afforded the preachers but a small support. In consequence of this dividing up, our quarterly meetings were generally but small affairs, exciting but little interest among our people.

In this part of the district, as it is to some extent all through Vermont, and many other parts of New England, there is a tendency among our people toward Congregationalism, — not in regard to doctrines, or system of church government, but in their financial operations, and, in some respects, in the observance of our rules of discipline and mode of worship. This tendency grows out of the early habits and education of the people.

In going around the district, I found the state of religion exceedingly low. I think there is reason to fear that not only Methodism, but religion in general, had lost its hold, in a great measure, on many people all through the western part of Vermont. It was but seldom we heard of any revival among any denomination. The love of riches appeared to have seized all classes, and there was a strong inclination to Universalism and scepticism.

This state of feeling developed itself very strongly, in some places, by the desecration of the Sabbath, intemperance, and profaneness; and by an entire neglect of the ordinances of God's house, and scanty support of religious and benevolent institutions. There were some towns in the western part of the State, where the inhabitants were populous, and many of them very wealthy, in which was very little preaching of any kind, except at their funerals. It was believed, by many, that in some of these towns more money had been expended, some years, for the single article of *cigars*, than for the preaching of the Gospel.

I think that in the part of the district which was lying in New York State, Methodism, at the time I was there, was in a more flourishing condition. It retained rather more of its original peculiarities. Our financial matters were in a better state, class-meetings were better attended, and our love-feasts were more select.

#### THE PRESIDING ELDERSHIP.

*Its importance. — Its responsibilities. — It must not be abolished.*

As it is pretty certain that my labors on Poultney district will finish all I shall ever have to do with the office and duties of the presiding Eldership, I desire to make a few remarks on this subject,

The importance of this office I never duly appreciated until I had the honor of being appointed to it. Nor was I fully aware of its responsibilities and difficulties until I found myself involved in them. I must now say, that I regard this office as being of great importance to our church, and for several reasons cannot be dispensed with without great injury to us.

1. It forms a part of the system of episcopacy, or general superintendency, and a well-regulated and efficient itinerancy. The supervision over so large a number of circuits and stations, spread over such an extensive tract of country, could never be effectually accomplished by our general superintendents, without aid afforded them by the presiding Elders. They could not become acquainted with the state and wants of the stations to be supplied with preachers, and they could not know the characters and talents of the preachers, so as to adapt the appointments to the circumstances of the case. In this country, if we give up the office of presiding Elders, we must also give up episcopacy and itinerancy.

2. Presiding Elders are necessary for the improvement of the ministry. Owing to a variety of circumstances, a large number of our ministers are young and inexperienced; and, since the work has been cut up into so many small stations,—an event which is unavoidable,—many of these young men must be alone, and of course they must have the pastoral charge. Now, that these young men should be under the care and supervision of brethren older and more experienced than themselves, must be evident to every reflecting man. This is necessary, that they may be carefully instructed in our doctrines, and especially in the peculiarities of our principles of church government. And such supervision

is necessary in order that such young men may be officially reported, if need be, to the body, — that is, to the Conference, — to whom they are accountable for their doctrine, their character, and their administration.

Without the office of presiding Elder, it would be exceedingly difficult, if not utterly impossible, to preserve uniformity of doctrine and discipline among us. This system of supervision by presiding Elders forms a connecting link throughout the entire church, which could not otherwise be preserved. If a presiding Elder be a good and judicious man, he will be of immense importance to the church in forming the character of our young men, and fitting them for usefulness as Methodist preachers, by instructing them in the discipline and usages of our church, and also in their manners as public speakers. Such checks and restraints as this office exerts among us, as a body of ministers, cannot but exert a healthful influence, and greatly tend to promote peace and uniformity. Much of that uniformity which has always prevailed in our ministry, as respects doctrine and discipline, is attributable, I have no doubt, to the office of presiding Elder.

3. This officer is necessary to the safety of our membership. It connects with it a court of appeal and a judge of law. This court is a quarterly Conference, over which the presiding Elder presides. This is certainly for the safety of the membership of the church. If a preacher in charge should expel a member, such person so expelled has a right to appeal to a higher court, where a higher officer presides, — a court composed of official members of the station, and where the preacher is on a level with others; a court where, upon investigation, it might appear that the proceedings were not according to the rule of discipline. Here the presiding

Elder, in such case, would have the right to decide that the proceedings were null and void. Or it might appear that justice had not been done to the member, and on this account the quarterly Conference could reverse the decision in the case. It needs an officer whose business it is to see that our rules are carried out, and that justice is done to all our members, and this is made the special business of the presiding Elder. Without such an officer, there could be no such court of appeal; and without such court, in thousands of instances, justice might not be done to the members of our church.

There was a time when I thought the presiding Elders should be chosen by the annual Conference, instead of being appointed by the Bishop, as they now are; but I have changed my mind on this subject. I think, as they are the Bishops' assistants, they should be both elected and appointed by them. They hold a relation to the Bishop that class-leaders hold to the preacher in charge, and there would, therefore, be no more propriety in the members of an annual Conference choosing the one than there would be of the members of the society choosing the other. In either case there would be an infringement on the system of superintendency, and in either case a door would be opened for ambition and excitement, which among Christian people it is very desirable to avoid.

The responsibilities connected with the duties of presiding Elders are very great, as will appear if we consider three things.

1. They form the Bishop's COUNCIL. Although no rule of discipline constitutes them such, they are such in fact, and must be from necessity, and they are so recognized by all our superintendents. The Bishops never make out the appointments without consulting them. Now, to give a

just and faithful representation of all parties concerned, is certainly a matter of great responsibility, and every conscientious presiding Elder must feel it to be so.

2. They hold an important relation to their brethren in the ministry, who are their fellow-laborers in the district. They sometimes find it to be their duty to advise the appointment of preachers to places with which they are not well pleased. The presiding Elder may have good reasons for advising the removal of a preacher, or his appointment to a certain place, which he may not find it easy to explain to the brother. There are sometimes reasons which it may not be best for the preacher to know. They may relate to his wife, or to his children, or they may be such as are beyond his power to control; and therefore it may not be best for him to know what they are. His removal from a good circuit, or his appointment to a hard one, may have greatly afflicted his feelings, or perhaps even offended him. The presiding Elder in such cases knows his own integrity, and that he has done the best he could under the circumstances of the case; but it may be difficult to make the afflicted brother believe it. In such cases, he has no other way but to bear it as among the burdens of a responsible station, and look for a righteous decision concerning the purity of his motives to a higher court.

3. The responsibility does not end with the influence he has in making out the several appointments. In consequence of his seniority of office, he may have to advise his fellow-laborers in the district, and sometimes even *reprove* them. Preachers may err, as well as others; but who will admonish them, if their brethren in the ministry do not? And who among their brethren in the ministry more suitable than their seniors in office? Indeed, the discipline of the church makes it their duty

for it gives them the pastoral care of all the preachers in their district, both travelling and local. But it often happens that such preachers as need admonition are the most unwilling to receive it. They are usually most impatient of reproof. If any man doubt this, let him try the experiment. If such are the responsibilities of this office, our presiding Elders need both wisdom and grace.

If this office is ever abolished its abolition will originate and be brought about by a class of ministers who have but little sympathy with our system of itinerancy, or are so circumstanced as not to see its importance.

1. They will be men who have received appointments as presidents, principals, or professors in our literary institutions, who from their own experience know nothing about itinerancy and pastoral duties. Such will probably be the first to suggest its abolition, for they are least of all men prepared to appreciate its importance. The views of such men must necessarily be exceedingly local and limited, on the practical workings of our system of superintendence and itinerancy.

2. Next to these there will be a class of men whose itinerancy consists of a removal from one city or principal village to another. In such places a quarterly meeting usually amounts to no more than an ordinary occasion, and, of course, the visits and labors of a presiding Elder are not much appreciated. Perhaps their pastor is a man of as much talent as their presiding Elder, and perhaps as acceptable a preacher. Under these circumstances, both the preacher and the people, looking only to their own accommodations, and not to the general good of the church, may conclude the office is unnecessary. They will, perhaps, think

of the expense it makes for them, and desire it may be abolished.

But if ever this office is dispensed with, a very important link in the system of general superintendency will be broken, and a very powerful means of promoting uniformity of sentiment and disciplinary administration will be destroyed, and the beauty and glory of our system of itinerancy will be greatly marred, if not entirely overthrown.

## SUPERNUMERARY.

1850, 1851.

Our Conference this year was held at Saratoga Springs, May 29. As circumstances did not seem to require my labors as an effective man, the Conference, at my request, continued me in my relation as a supernumerary.

Some time in October the health of Rev. S. Parks, who was stationed in Pittsfield, failed, and, at the request of my presiding Elder, I supplied his place for about three months, until he, in some measure, recovered. Shortly after I had finished my work here, I was requested to supply the place of Rev. G. C. Wells, whose health had failed. I accordingly went to Williamstown, about the middle of February, and continued until the sitting of the Annual Conference. Nothing occurred in connection with my labors, in either of these places, worthy of any particular notice.

In the vicinity of these places, including all Berkshire county, Mass., the Methodists have gained quite a respectable standing. We have a church in nearly every town. The time was, when strong prejudices existed against our doctrines and usages. Rev. L. Smith is said to have been the first Methodist who preached here. He

came to Pittsfield, I think, in 1790, and called on Mr. Root, who lived in the west part of the town, and obtained permission to preach in his house. I have heard Captain Root, his son, who is now living in Pittsfield, say, that he was sent all around the neighborhood to give notice that a Methodist preacher would preach at his father's house in the evening. When he returned from this errand, having never seen a Methodist preacher, he desired to see how he looked. So he stepped up softly, and looked through a small opening of the door, and saw the preacher on his knees, appearing to be much engaged in prayer. Such a sight was perfectly new to him, and made a deep impression on his mind. He thought Methodist preachers must be very good men. He preached there but once.

The next year, Rev. Robert Green was sent to form a circuit in these parts. He visited the west part of Pittsfield, and preached at the house of a Mr. Stevens. He could not, for a while, get the attention of the people. But it so happened that there came on a snow storm, and blocked up the roads to his next appointment, which was on the west side of the mountain; therefore, he was obliged to remain several days in the place. Like a faithful follower of Christ, he knew his business was, not merely to fill his appointments, but to win souls to Christ. So he undertook to visit from house to house, conversing and praying with the people, and he would invite them to come and hear him preach in the evening. Immediately a seriousness began to appear among the people, and soon a gracious revival took place, and a good society was formed. Shortly after this, a church was erected in this part of the town. In this church the New York Conference held its session in 1810. And here I was admitted into the Conference, on trial.

Some years after this, a church was built in the east village, and at present our brethren are engaged in erecting quite an elegant church, in the centre of the village, which is now a large and flourishing place.

The Conference of 1851 was held in the village of North Adams, Mass. This is a very flourishing village, and although our society here is not very large, there was no difficulty in accommodating the preachers. Our Congregational and Baptist brethren showed themselves very cordial on the occasion. Their hearts, and houses, and churches, were all open to receive and accommodate us.

At this Conference, a fact was demonstrated which I had for years believed; that is, that there was a sufficient number of brethren belonging to the Conference better qualified for delegates to the General Conference than I am. This fact had become so apparent to a majority of the brethren, that they voted accordingly.

At the Conference of 1851, I asked the favor of being continued in the same relation which I held the past year, and my request was granted. I am now left at liberty to preach as I may have strength and opportunity; and this I am disposed to do. I still feel my ordination vows are upon me, and that it is my duty still to do all I can to promote the cause of Christ.

I am often brought to look over my past life, in doing which, I see much to humble me in view of my unfaithfulness to God and to his church. I have not effected as much as I hoped for when I first commenced, and yet I trust I have not been wholly useless. My gift has never been of the awakening kind, and yet I now and then find instances of persons having been awakened and converted through my feeble instrumentality. There has been one feature connected with the history of those who have

acknowledged themselves my spiritual children, that is, very few of them have ever backslidden. I hope it may at last appear that I have not labored in the ministry wholly in vain. If it shall finally appear that any good has ever been done through my instrumentality, to God be ascribed all the glory.

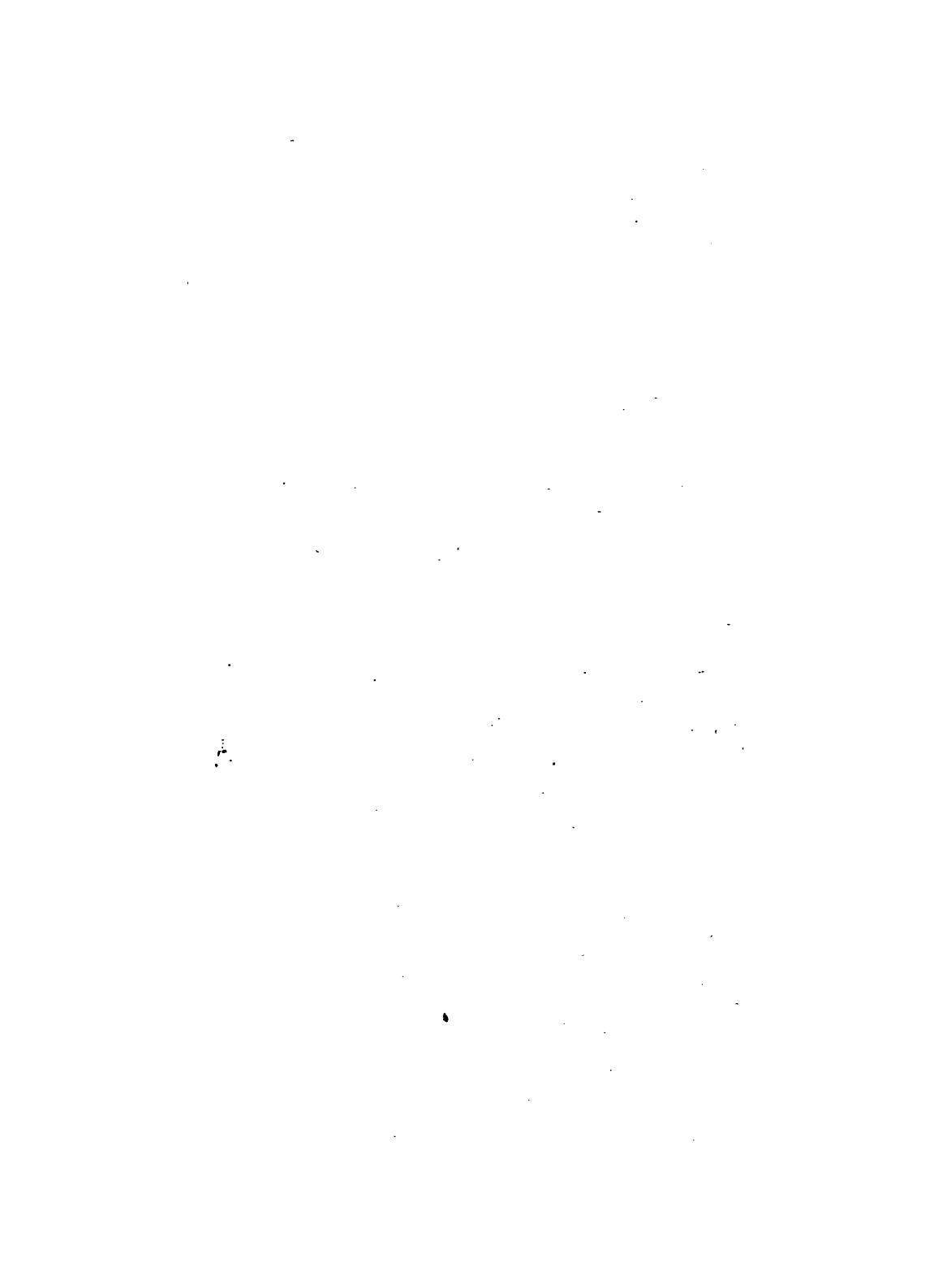
It is quite probable that I have nearly finished my course on earth. I look back on my past life with pleasure and regret, and I look forward with hope and fear. I made my fortune for this life when I exchanged my sins for the cross of Christ; for thereby I was introduced into the society and fellowship of Christians: and I hope to make my fortune for the life to come, when I shall exchange the cross for a crown of glory; for then I shall be introduced to the society of saints and angels. I regret that I have not been more faithful and useful, and I fear I may yet miss my way, for many whom I have known, after having preached to others, have themselves fallen. I am thereby admonished to watch and pray. All my hope is in the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ.

A large portion of my early friends, both among preachers and people, are gone to their reward; and nearly all my father's family have departed this life. But I am not left without friends, for while some have been removed, others have been raised up in their stead. I hope I shall not outlive all my friends, or live to be burdensome to any of them, or useless to the world. I sometimes desire to depart and to be with Christ, but am willing to live, yea, desire to live, so long as I can promote the cause of Christ, and until I am fully prepared for heaven. When I depart may I depart in peace!

**ADDITIONAL REMINISCENCES**

**AND**

**MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.**



#### **EARLY PREJUDICES AGAINST METHODISM.**

In the early history of our church, our people had strong prejudices to encounter all through this country, especially within the bounds of the New England States. New England was the land of our Pilgrim Fathers, who were, generally, rigid Calvinists. Their descendants were very carefully trained up in the doctrinal system of their forefathers, under the imposing title of "Doctrines of Grace."

The peculiar doctrines of the Synod of Dort, and of the Westminster Confession, were pretty generally believed throughout all these parts. They had been embodied in the Cambridge Confession and Saybrook Platform, and were adopted by the Congregational churches very generally. These doctrines were taught without any disguise whatever, both in the pulpit and by the press. They were inculcated in the children's school-books and primers, for most of the good people of those days really believed them.

There is an admirable poem, said to have been written by Michael Wigglesworth, a school-teacher, about seventy years ago. The following is an extract. It is designed to illustrate the proceedings of the day of judgment, and to vindicate the justice of God in damning those reprobates who die in infancy.

" Then to the bar they all drew near,  
Who died in infancy ;  
And never had, either good or bad,  
Effected personally."

They are represented as addressing the Judge, and pleading in their own behalf why they should not be damned for Adam's sin. They are made to speak as follows:—

“ Not we, but he, ate of the tree,  
Whose fruit was interdicted;  
Yet on us all, for his sad fall,  
Is punishment inflicted.”

To this plea of these eternally reprobated infants, the glorious Judge is represented as replying in the following language:—

“ But what you call old Adam's fall,  
And only his trespass,  
You call amiss to call it his;  
Both his and yours it was.  
  
“ He was designed of all mankind  
To be a public head;  
A common root, whence all should shoot,  
And stood in all their stead.”

Then, as if the argument was overwhelming, and calculated to silence all their pleadings, it is added:—

“ The glorious king thus answering,  
They cease, and plead no longer;  
Their consciences must needs confess  
His reasonings are the stronger.”

This poem was beautifully illustrative of their views of divine sovereignty. The following sentence is also found, in sober prose, in the diary of one good man of those days:—

“ Enjoyed some hours' comfortable meditation on the infinite mercy of God in damning little babes.”

*For the foregoing extracts I am indebted to “Lyell's Second Visit,” vol. i., p. 58. — Eccl. Mag.*

It is not very strange that a people who had imbibed such views of divine sovereignty should look with suspicion and prejudice upon a class of ministers who taught doctrines entirely different. They could not be well pleased to have such intruders among them. Even some of their hymns, used in their religious devotions, abounded with anathemas against such heterodox teachers. The following is a specimen, taken from Herbert's Hymns: —

“ Shall Satan ever have to boast  
Of one that fell from grace?  
I'd tell the man that dared say so,  
He 's one of Satan's race.”

In these early days of our history, Methodist preachers brought strange things to the people's ears, at a time when they were not prepared to receive them. Many thought it an awful thing for a man to call in question the doctrine that God had from all eternity absolutely and unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. It was a pretty certain sign of a reprobate to deny the doctrine of particular election; and to teach that a man may know his sins forgiven, or that a Christian may live without sin, was a great heresy. And especially to believe that a man may fall from grace, so as to be finally lost, after he has become a Christian, was beyond endurance. Our younger brethren of the present day can scarcely imagine how offensive these prominent features of Methodism were to our Calvinist brethren of those days; or what prejudices and opposition Methodism had to encounter fifty or sixty years ago.

As our doctrines and usages have become better known and understood, they have become more popular, and there remains scarce any difficulty in our preachers finding access to any place they may wish in any part

of New England, or anywhere else in our nation. But for those who come after us in all coming time,—who may occupy fields which they never cleared, and eat fruit from trees which others planted,—it may not be amiss to record facts which occurred, in the days of their fathers, in the church. I therefore take the liberty to put upon record a few circumstances which are said to have occurred in this northern region of country, where my labors have been principally bestowed.

It is not very strange that the wicked should feel an opposition to truth, and especially to such plain preaching as they generally heard from our early preachers; but it does seem very remarkable that good people should have opposed us. And it seems especially remarkable that our Calvinist brethren could not see their own inconsistency. Their creed taught them that God had eternally decreed all things which come to pass; yet when it came to pass that Methodism was propagated among them, they could not be reconciled to the event, although it must have been in exact accordance with his decrees. And although they believed that the number of God's elect would not, by any means, be either increased or diminished, they seemed to fear that these "wolves in sheep's clothing" would deceive the very elect. In most instances it was the ministers who were most alarmed. They often preached against us; but many of the common people heard us gladly.

At the time of which I now speak, the Congregational churches were established by law, in New England. Their ministers were supported by taxes. They seemed to think this country was theirs by inheritance, and that they really possessed *exclusive rights*. Perhaps most of the people composing the churches had divested themselves of the *intolerant* spirit which had persecuted the

Quakers, but as yet they had gone no further than barely to *tolerate*. *Religious liberty* was something they did not yet fully understand. All must pay taxes to build churches and to support the settled minister, whether they attended his ministry, or not, — whether they believed in the doctrines which he preached, or not; and, at one time, even if they were members of any other church, it made no difference.

Under these circumstances, it was exceedingly difficult, for a long time, to introduce Methodism into some parts of New England, especially Massachusetts and Connecticut. In many places it was difficult for our ministers to get access to the churches, and even to their school-houses, although they belonged to the town. In many places meetings were held by the people of the town, and, after hearing a lecture from their good minister on "wolves in sheep's clothing," and the dreadful heresy of Arminianism, they would pass resolutions not to permit the Methodists to preach or hold forth, as they called it, anywhere within the parish. But their opposition did not always succeed according to their wishes. Our ministers have found access almost everywhere; and in many instances our exclusion from the churches and school-houses would awaken a sympathy among the people which resulted in the erection of churches of our own.

## REV. J. GREGORY.

Br. G. was a local preacher, who resided at Sand-lake, N. Y. He and his wife were on their way to visit some friends in Connecticut, when Saturday night overtook them; they put up at a tavern, to stay over the Sabbath. He was a very venerable-looking man, and the landlord, who was a deacon of the church, suspected he was a

minister; and, on learning the fact, invited him to attend church on the Sabbath, and said he would introduce him to their minister, who would no doubt be glad to have him occupy the pulpit, taking it for granted that he was of the standing order. So, in the morning, they went to meeting together, and the deacon introduced him to the minister, suggesting that Mr. G. should be invited to preach. The minister looked at him a moment, and said to him, "Are you not a Methodist?" "I am," said Mr. G. He then turned to his deacon, and expressed his surprise that he should make such a suggestion. "I cannot ask this man to preach; for you know, sir, that the church passed a vote that no Methodist should ever preach here." So the deacon, rather mortified, seated Br. G. in a pew, and he had the pleasure of being a hearer that day.

## REV. W. FISK.

It is said that Dr. Fisk, in the earlier days of his ministry, gained access to one of their churches in the town of C., N. H., but much against the wishes of the minister of the parish. But when he found he could not prevent it, he thought, if he could get him to preach the peculiar doctrines of Methodism, that would of course use him up in that place,—they would be so manifestly heretical and absurd, that his people could not endure them at all. So he requested Mr. Fisk to preach his doctrines. Mr. F. told him he would, at some suitable time. Accordingly, after having preached there a number of times, he gave it out that when he came again he would preach on the subject of doctrines, at the particular request of their minister. This appointment drew out a large assembly, and Mr. F. was enabled to do good justice to the subject. ~~After he had concluded,~~ he said he should like to know

what the people thought of these distinctive doctrines of Methodism; and he requested that all who believed they were according to the Bible would signify it by rising up, when nearly all the congregation arose. The result was, he organized a Methodist society of *seventeen* members the same evening.

## THE WOLF AND HIRELING.

It is said that one of our preachers was invited to preach in a certain parish, much against the wishes of the minister, Rev. Mr. F.; and when the day came, the minister found himself much embarrassed. If he should be at home, and should not attend meeting, some would be offended; and if he did attend, others would be offended,—they would think he gave his sanction to error by being present and hearing it; and it would, moreover, be setting a bad example to his people. So he concluded to make some business out of town that day. The next morning, the Methodist preacher, understanding the circumstances, thought he would call and converse with him, and see if he could not give him some information respecting Methodism that would, in some measure, soften his prejudices. He knocked at the door, and the minister came and opened the door. On announcing his name, the minister cried out, “Wolf! Wolf!” and was about to shut the door against him. The Methodist said, “Hireling! Hireling!” “What is that?” said Mr. F., “do you call me a hireling?” “Why, yes,” replied the other, “if I am a wolf, you certainly are a hireling, for you fled when I came to your church, yesterday; and the Saviour says, ‘The hireling fleeth when the wolf cometh, because he is an hireling.’” “Come in,” said Mr. F., “and let us talk that matter over a little.” So he went in, and, after an hour’s conversation,

Mr. F. became convinced that Methodist preachers were not quite so heterodox as he had imagined. They ever after were good friends.

#### BALAAAM SADDLING THE ASS.

A story is told of one of our preachers, that is a little amusing. Rev. Mr. J. C. obtained access to a certain parish, and many of the people were much pleased both with him and his doctrine. But their minister and a few of the ancients of the church were much opposed to him, and did everything they could to shut him out of the parish. The circumstance of his using no notes, and the clearness and fervency with which he presented Divine truth, gave him great favor with most of the people, who had long sat under a very different kind of preaching, both as to matter and manner. They supposed he must be divinely inspired, to be able to preach in such a manner. But the minister said he was a deceiver, and that he committed his sermons to memory before he went into the pulpit; and, to convince them that this was the case, he proposed that, next time he came, he would give him a text just as he was going into the pulpit. To this they all agreed, and a great multitude came out to witness the experiment which was to test this matter; and as Br. C. passed up the aisle on his way to the pulpit, the minister arose and handed him a slip of paper. He went into the pulpit, and, on reading it, found that it was a request to preach on the following words: "And Balaam saddled his ass." So, after singing and praying as usual, he read the request before the congregation, and informed them that a gentleman in the congregation had handed him this request as he was coming up the aisle. He remarked that he supposed that his hearers recollected the circumstances

with which the text stood connected, and therefore he should not detain them with a lengthened introduction, but should proceed to apply the text in an analogical view. He said that from the text he should undertake to make three things appear :

I. That Balaam represented all hireling priests of the present day. This he did — 1st, by showing that Balaam was a ~~false~~ prophet; 2d, he attempted to injure God's people; and, 3d, that he was a great lover of money.

II. He said he would show that the saddle which Balaam used on the occasion, represented the doctrinal system of Calvinism and the legal taxes with which the hireling priests contrived to saddle the people. On these points he dwelt with a great deal of ingenuity. And,

III. That, in the third place, he would endeavor to make it appear that Balaam's ass which he saddled, represented the people, who were so stupid as to sit under the ministry of men who gave no evidence that God had called them to preach; but were evidently mere *hirelings*, — lovers of the wages of unrighteousness, rather than the souls of men. Why need they preach, if God has eternally and unchangeably decreed whatever comes to pass? And what is the use of their preaching, if the number of the elect can be neither increased nor diminished? The ass, he said, was well known to be a very stupid animal, and often submitted to very heavy and unreasonable burdens. However, before he had finished his discourse, the reverend gentleman and a few of his more ancient friends had departed. They could not stay to hear him through, but remained long enough to be fully convinced that Methodist preachers can preach, not only without notes, but without previously committing their sermons to memory.

## T. SKEEL AND H. WEEKS.

We had a small society in Pittsford, Vt., as early as 1810. Our preachers usually found a home at the house of Captain Cooley. The captain was very friendly, and some of his family were members among us. It happened that a young preacher came to tarry over the Sabbath, and put up with the captain, and attended the Congregational church with the family. In the evening, the captain proposed to the preacher to accompany him to a conference meeting to be held in the school-house, and preach to the people, provided he should be requested. To this the preacher consented.

When the people had all assembled, the captain arose and said that a stranger present, who was well recommended as a Methodist preacher, having become his guest for a few days, would be willing to preach, if requested, — that he should be very glad to have him invited. After a little consultation among some of the gentlemen present, a young man, who was studying divinity with Rev. Mr. Weeks, and who seemed to have the charge of the meeting in the absence of their pastor, arose and said there was liberty, if the preacher were pleased to give them a discourse. So the preacher went forward, and opened the meeting, and preached a good practical sermon, addressed principally to young people. After he had finished, the young student seemed to think that what he had said could not be quite right, because he was a Methodist; so he arose and made quite an attack upon him. He was much afraid that the people would be led to believe they could go to heaven by their own good works. He closed his remarks by saying, that, if any were dissatisfied with his remarks, he would like to have them call and converse with him at his

room at the house of the minister. Captain Cooley arose and said he was quite dissatisfied,—he thought the stranger had been treated quite uncourteously. He said he felt a little afflicted with what had occurred, and should like an interview with the young gentleman; but, as he was a little younger than himself, he would invite him to call at his house the next evening. The young gentleman felt himself a little embarrassed, for he perceived the majority of those present were rather inclined to sympathize with the captain; so he agreed to come.

The next evening the young gentleman came, accompanied by several of his friends. After considerable conversation, it was agreed that the several points of theology in dispute should be publicly discussed by Mr. Weeks, their minister, and any Methodist minister Captain C. should furnish.

Upon this, the captain wrote to Rev. Thomas Skeel, a located preacher who resided in Hoosick, N. Y., and Mr. S. accepted the challenge. The day which was fixed upon at length arrived. The preachers met, and agreed on the mode of conducting the discussion. Each was to speak in turn. Mr. W. was to commence, and occupy two hours; then Mr. S. was to occupy the same length of time. Then each was to occupy half an hour, then each fifteen minutes, and then each five minutes.

The church was crowded to overflowing with a very attentive congregation. The meeting was opened by prayer. Mr. W. then commenced reading a manuscript which he had prepared, in which he attacked our doctrines, discipline, and church government, especially the latter. When he had read two hours, he was reminded that his time was expired, and Mr. S. commenced. Not having any knowledge of what course Mr. W. designed to take, he very briefly replied by remarking that Mr.

W. had not stated our doctrines fairly, or as they were stated in our standard writings: and that, as it respected our discipline and church government, he had served them as Thomas Paine did the Bible. That, as our doctrines and discipline were before the public and speak for themselves, he should make no reply whatever to Mr. W., but should undertake to show that the *peculiarities* of Calvinism, as held by the Congregational churches throughout New England, were *scriptural, unreasonable, and of dangerous tendency*. And at it he went in a most masterly manner, until his time was up. After a little recess, Mr. W. went on again reading his lengthy manuscript during all his half hour. But before the remainder of his time was up he had finished reading what he had written, and was wholly unable to add another word.

Br. Skeel was a powerful man in argument, possessing a most extraordinary memory; remarkably shrewd and eloquent. He was a man of a most noble appearance and gentlemanly bearing, and on this occasion he appeared to great advantage. The doctrine of decrees, election and reprobation, as they are held by our Calvinist brethren; the impossibility of falling from grace, and the necessity of living in sin, were made to appear in their true light. He could quote their articles, and whole pages of their writers, without a single scrap of book or manuscript before him. Scripture, reason, and experience, were made to bear against them with tremendous force. His *two hours* were employed in the use of these battering-rams. When it came to his turn to speak half an hour, he took up and defended several points of doctrine in the system of Methodism; such as the general atonement, the free agency of man, the conditionality of salvation, the possibility of falling from grace, and of

Christian perfection. The flood of Scripture-proof, which he brought to bear on these points, perfectly astonished the people. His fifteen minutes were employed in answering some common objections against the foregoing doctrines. And he wound up, during his five minutes, with a most powerful appeal to the consciences of the people, exhorting the people to avail themselves of the ample provisions offered them in the Gospel.

Methodism had never before been so ably defended in these parts; indeed, until then it was very little known among the people, and never had the peculiarities of Calvinism taken such a thorough drubbing. Calvinism received a very severe rebuke by this discussion. Many of Mr. Weeks' friends were much mortified, and greatly disappointed in the result. By this discussion, the friends of Methodism were increased four-fold through all these parts.

## LORENZO DOW.

Mr. Dow was admitted into the Conference, on trial, in 1798. He travelled regularly only three years. He was a man remarkable for eccentricity. But at that time he was a holy, zealous and useful preacher. His labors in this part of the country were blest to the conversion of many sinners. He made his first appearance in Middlebury without any previous appointment. He was accompanied by three or four brethren from another town. He took his stand under the shade of an ancient elm, near the bank of Otter Creek, where they commenced singing a hymn. The voice of singing soon attracted the attention of the people in that direction. Some went because they heard strange singing; some, because they saw others go. Many, seeing a

gathering in the place, ran in great haste, supposing that some person had fallen into the creek. By the time they had finished singing, some scores of persons had assembled. Mr. Dow then kneeled down and prayed most fervently, after which he preached a most powerful discourse, which made a deep impression on all present. When he had finished, several persons intreated him to stop and preach again in the evening; but he had another appointment several miles distant, and could not comply with their request. By his advice, a few persons set up a prayer-meeting. Not long after this, regular Methodist preaching was introduced here.

About this time, through his instrumentality, a society was formed in Brandon, a considerable village, several miles south of Middlebury. In this place lived a Major H., a merchant of considerable business and influence, having many very respectable connections living around him. Hearing that Mr. Dow was going to preach in the town adjoining, he and his niece, a young lady who was at his house on a visit, went to hear him. After he had concluded his sermon, as was his usual manner, he requested that all who would promise to set out and seek religion, would rise up. Several arose, among whom was his niece. The major, being fearful that the young lady would be disgraced by such an act, and thinking she would appear less singular if he arose also, he rose up. The preacher then lifted up his hands and solemnly called upon God and all the holy angels to witness this promise.

When the meeting was closed, the major got the horses ready, but could not for some time find his niece. At length, he found her standing around the corner of the house, weeping most bitterly, for deep conviction for sin had fastened on her heart. "Come," said he, "let us

go home;" so, mounting their horses, they set off for home. But they had not proceeded far, when, looking back, they saw the preacher coming after them with considerable speed, on his way to another appointment.

The major felt very unpleasant, but thought within himself that Dow should not get any advantage of him, in conversation, for he resolved he would be very cautious. Mr. Dow soon overtook them, and rode alongside of the major, and said, "My friend, do you not think that religion is a good thing?" "O, certainly," said the major. "Well," said he, "if I will give you some good advice, will you follow it?" The major of course said he would. "Well," said Mr. Dow, "if religion is a good thing, I advise you to set out immediately to seek it, and never rest until you find it. Now, is not this good advice?" The major at once consented that it was. "Well," said Mr. Dow, "you have promised you would follow good advice, if I would give it, and you acknowledge this advice is good; now, therefore, I call God to witness this promise." On saying this he rode on and left them.

Now the major was completely confounded; for, notwithstanding all his caution, he had pledged himself to seek the Lord. They rode on in silence, until they came where the road turned to go to the place where Mr. Dow was to preach. The young lady stopped and said, "Uncle, I should like to go and hear Mr. Dow again." "O, no," said the major, "our people will be waiting for us to dinner." "I wish, uncle, you would indulge me, and consent to go," said she. "Come," said the major, "I will tell you what I will do; if you will say no more about it, you may come to the store to-morrow, and make a selection of anything for a dress that you may choose, and you shall be welcome to it." On this she

burst into tears, and said, "O, what good will a fine dress do me, a miserable sinner, that is going to hell?" The major made no reply, but turned his horse, and accompanied her to the meeting; not a word was spoken by either of them until they reached the place.

When the preacher had finished his discourse, and driven truth into the consciences of many, he was for clenching the nail as usual. So he again called upon such as were determined to seek religion to rise up. By this time the major was prepared to arise with as much sincerity as any one present, for the Spirit of God had gotten a powerful hold on his heart.

After the meeting was concluded, they set off for home with heavy hearts. In the major's heart, especially, there was a terrible struggle. When they arrived, he found his brother and lady were at his house; they had come to make a Sabbath visit. His wife fretted at him a little for keeping them waiting dinner so long, and more than intimated that she thought it a poor business to be running after crazy Dow. They, however, sat down to the table, but the young lady, his niece, was missing, and a little messenger was sent to call her, who soon returned, and reported that she was in her room weeping. "There," said Mrs. H., "you have been the means of her ruin; I wish you had kept away from Dow's meeting; she will soon be as crazy as he is." "My dear," said the major, "I beg of you, don't say a word." So he commenced carving and waiting on the table; but his heart was so full that he durst not look up. After passing one or two plates, he could contain his feelings no longer, but burst into a flood of tears, and withdrew from the table and left the room. Immediately all left the table, and not a morsel of their splendid dinner was eaten that day.

This event produced much talk through the village. By many it was supposed that Major H. had become crazy, by attending the preaching of Lorenzo Dow. However, it was not long before the major, his wife and niece, with several others, were brought into the liberty of the gospel, and could testify that Christ has power to forgive sin. Immediately Mr. Dow and his colleague were invited to preach at the major's house. They established regular preaching in the place, and formed a society. Several prominent members were taken in, and we have ever since, up to the present time, that is, for about fifty years, had a good society in that place. I think the above notice of Lorenzo Dow is due to his memory; although his peculiar notions of duty afterwards misled him. I fear his last days were not his best days.

## REV. HENRY RYAN.

I have already alluded to this brother, as the man who formed the first Methodist class in what is now called Warren Circuit, in 1798. He was admitted into the travelling connection on trial, in 1800, the same time at which several men were admitted, who have been somewhat eminent among us in these parts; all of whom have gone to their reward. Among these were Smith Arnold, Samuel Merwin, and William Anson.

Mr. Ryan was born in Ireland; he was a man of great physical strength, and remarkable for courage. He feared no man. It is storied of him, that he once had occasion to stop at a public house for refreshments, where there were some public doings, and where a number of drunken and noisy fellows were assembled; some of them suspecting him to be a Methodist preacher, undertook to have some sport with him. After whis-

pering awhile with each other, as though contriving some plan, one of them came to him and inquired if he were not a Methodist preacher. He answered, "Yes," with considerable emphasis. Pretty soon, the fellow, accompanied by several others, came to him, appearing quite angry, and said, "I can't swallow the answer you gave me just now." "Well, then," said Mr. Ryan, "you must *chew* it till you can." "Will you fight?" said the fellow. Upon this he looked him full in the face, and, pulling back the sleeve of his coat a little, showing his brawny arm, said, "See here; God did not give me this arm for nothing!" After this they kept at a respectful distance.

In one place where he travelled, there lived a very wicked man, who was much opposed to Methodist preachers, and went so far as to make a violent attack on Mr. Ryan's colleague, Rev. Thomas Ravlin. Mr. Ravlin was rather a feeble man. This fellow happened to meet him one day, when he sprung upon him like a tiger, pulled the skirt of his coat over his head, and held him with one hand, and with a whip flogged him very severely; and then told him never to come into that neighborhood again, and declared he would whip every Methodist preacher who should come into the place.

When Mr. Ryan came around to the neighborhood to preach, having heard of the abuse his colleague had received, and the threat the fellow had made, he called at his door and inquired if he was the man who had whipped the Methodist preacher. "Yes," said he, "and I will whip every Methodist preacher that ever comes here to preach." "Well," said Mr. Ryan, "I am a Methodist preacher, and I have come here to preach; now, you can whip me if you like;" and fell to exhorting

him to repent of his sins. As the fellow came towards him, said Mr. Ryan, "You had better take good care what you do; you see I am a big man, and I have a very large arm," at the same time drawing back his sleeve a little, and showing it to him. "If I should strike you, may the Lord have mercy upon you, for I should not." The fellow was affrighted; he left Mr. Ryan, and went into his house, and was never known to abuse another Methodist preacher.

In one of the Lake towns in the north part of New York State, Br. Ryan had an appointment to preach in a school-house. When he came to the place, he found the door locked against him. So he told the people he would preach out-door. Accordingly, he stood up near the house, the people gathered around him, and he commenced preaching. In the mean time a mob gathered and crowded along up near him, designing to seize and carry him off. Their leader made two or three attempts to take hold on him. But by this time the preacher had become pretty warm in his subject, and his brawny arms were acting their part very powerfully, in various gesticulations. Several times this fellow happened to come directly in their way, and, whenever this happened, he suddenly *leaned*, and came very nigh falling. After making several attempts to get hold on him, they found he was so engaged in his subject, and was so much in earnest about it, that he was quite unapproachable; so they concluded to give it up and let him alone.

#### THE PERSEVERANCE OF FAITH.

It is very pleasant to trace the wisdom of God and the workings of his providence in preserving the truth in our world. Sometimes the light seems nearly extinguished

in some places; deaths and removals break up a society, and, for a long while, there are only here and there a few individuals left, and they are ready to say with the ancient prophet, "They seek my life also." But God has not left himself without a seed to serve him; the remaining spark, that seemed ready to die, has been kindled into a flame, and a gracious revival has followed. The faith and perseverance of a few individuals have sometimes been blessed in bringing about gracious revivals; and, many times, means the most unlikely have been used to bring about events the most extraordinary, when ordinary means had utterly failed.

The following account, among many others, illustrates this remark. It was related to me by one of our aged ministers. Early in the history of our church, somewhere in the western part of Pennsylvania, there was a small Methodist society formed, who attempted to build a small church; but it was little more than covered when it was wholly abandoned, for the members had either removed, or were dead, or backslidden, except one old sister. The meeting-house was situated in the woods, and no family lived anywhere near. This good old sister, finding herself alone in profession, after all the other members had dropped off, who used to meet in class in this unfinished church, continued to go there every week alone to meet her class, or rather to meet her God and worship him. She had often been seen on her way to this house or returning from it solitary and alone, and many wondered for what purpose she went there. Some intimated that she was a witch, and that she went to this place of solitude for no good purpose. At length two young men agreed they would secrete themselves in the upper part of the building, and find out what she did in this lonely place.

They had not been there long before the old lady entered. She took her seat, and, after a little while, she began to talk and tell the Lord how she felt. She spoke of her trials and of her comforts, of her purpose to serve God all the days of her life, and of her joyful prospects of the future state. She spoke very much as people generally do in class-meeting. She then kneeled down and went to praying. She told the Lord all her trials, and prayed for grace to enable her to do and suffer his will; she prayed that God would awaken the people and convert them, that she might have some to accompany her in her heavenly journey. She prayed mightily to God to revive his work in that place, and again to build up the walls of Zion. And she continued to wrestle in great agony of soul, until the Spirit of God got hold of the young men in their hiding-place, and they began to weep, and down they came, desiring the old lady to pray for them. This she gladly did, and they continued in prayer until the Lord blessed them. They then concluded their meeting, and the young men agreed to meet her there next Sabbath to hold a class-meeting.

When the next Sabbath arrived, the news of this singular affair had spread around, and quite a number attended. The old lady and her two young converts were there. She proceeded to open the meeting as usual, and went on with her class-meeting. On the next Sabbath the little house that had been so long deserted was filled with people, and a way was opened for the gospel to be once more preached in this long deserted place. Soon a revival followed, and a good Methodist society was raised up in the place, and the long deserted house was finished.

## UNIVERSALISM.

The belief that all men will be saved is arrived at by a false mode of reasoning, and a perversion of the meaning of Scripture. Universalism is usually embraced by *backsliders*, and such persons as have been *awakened*, and have *resisted the Holy Spirit*. It seems to afford a hiding-place to sinners which effectually shelters them from anxiety about their future state. It makes the conscience quiet, by flattering the sinner with delusive hopes.

The reasonings of Universalists seem very plausible, and are often calculated to deceive the unwary. They tell us that God is too good to permit any of his creatures to suffer eternally; that a finite being cannot transgress an infinite law; that a finite being cannot be infinitely miserable; that the time of sinning, although it were to extend through the whole period of a man's life, is too short to be followed by endless punishment. But, however plausible such arguments may seem, it is certain that those who are satisfied with them pay but a poor compliment to the Bible, and have but a poor idea of the character of God, or the nature of sin.

Universalists, however, are not generally willing to be considered as being deists; they usually profess great respect for the Bible, and often quote it. Many of their preachers are great adepts in explaining the Scriptures, so as to make them appear consistent with Universalism. As the main point with them is that all men will be saved, they must deny the existence of such a being as the devil, and of such a place as hell, where the wicked are tormented. Whatever the Scriptures may say respecting either the one or the other, must be so

explained as to be consistent with their notions on this subject. But some of their explanations put matters sometimes into quite an awkward position.

Mr. Fitz, a preacher among them some years ago, in a sermon on the non-personality of the devil, said that all that is meant in the Scriptures by the word devil, "is the deceitful, wicked heart of men." Accordingly, in explaining the temptation of our Saviour, which is said to have been of the devil, he said that Christ, like all other men, had a "deceitful, wicked heart," and that "this was the devil that tempted him." Others have asserted that all the devil alluded to in the Scriptures is to be understood as *diseases*.

Who cannot see that such interpretations bring Christ and his religion into great contempt, and make the Scriptures appear ridiculous? A religion cannot amount to much, whose author, "like other men, has a *deceitful and wicked heart*." And all those passages which speak of Christ being tempted of the devil; the devil talking and saying thus and so; the devil being cast out of persons, and entering into swine, &c., must be perfect nonsense.

One of this class of interpreters of Scripture, in a discourse which he delivered, took great pains to prove that there is no other hell spoken of in the Bible, than the grave. He said that wherever the word hell occurs in the Bible it must be always understood as alluding to the grave where our bodies are buried. After he had finished his discourse, he invited any who might dissent from his views to speak freely. It happened there was a Methodist preacher present, who arose and addressed the people after the following manner: "I think, friends, we are under many obligations to the gentleman who has preached to us this evening. We

have always been in the habit of understanding our Lord's words in Matt. x. 28, as designed to teach us that we should fear God, where he says, 'Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.' But now we learn that our Lord designed to teach us no such thing. Hell here, as everywhere else, means the grave, and as it is the sexton who casts us into the grave, we are henceforth to fear the sexton: I say unto you, fear the sexton." This was answering a fool according to his folly, and was calculated to set his interpretation of Scripture in its true light.

Some years ago a celebrated preacher took for his text, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity; these three, but the greatest of these is charity." He endeavored to show that all men have faith, for he said all men believe there is a God. All men, he said, had hope of being saved, for God had promised to save all. Charity, he said, consisted in giving alms to the poor; and all men gave more or less alms, therefore, all men had charity. In this way he made it appear that all men would be saved; for faith, hope and charity were cardinal virtues of a Christian character. These would always abide. When he had finished his discourse, he called on one of our preachers, who happened to be present, to close by prayer. So the preacher kneeled down and prayed as follows: "O Lord, have mercy on us all, and give us faith, for the Scriptures declare, 'all men have not faith,' and that 'without faith it is impossible to please God.' And give us, we pray thee, hope, for we are told in thy word, that some are living 'without God and without hope in the world.' And we pray thee also to give us charity, for we are told in the Bible that, 'if we give all our goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it prof-

iteth us nothing.' We pray thee, therefore, that thou wouldest give us faith, hope and charity, that we may be finally saved, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*"

This appropriate reference to the Scriptures so completely refuted all three of the positions taken by the preacher, that he was completely confounded. The people so felt its force that they went away without giving the preacher an invitation to come again.

When I was a young man, a circumstance occurred in the town where I resided, which made a deep impression on my mind very unfavorable to the system of Universalism. I never dared to rely upon it a moment ever since. I was led to fear that, however plausible it may appear, and however pleasant hopes it may inspire while living and in health, it can afford no hope to an awakened conscience in a dying hour. A local preacher, with whom I was acquainted, related all the particulars to me. Captain T. was his uncle, and he was living in his family at the time.

There was a young man, a cousin of his, also, living in the family. The captain, his uncle, was a staunch Universalist, and used to preach occasionally. He was a man of rather superior talents, and took great pains to make a proselyte of this young man, and succeeded too well. The young man soon found himself no longer under that fear and restraint he had been accustomed to feel, and rejoiced in what he called his "glorious liberty;" and the fruits of his Universalism were soon very evident in his careless life.

Some time after this he went to an adjoining town to visit some of his friends, and was taken sick. This brought him to his senses, and he became terribly alarmed about the state of his soul in view of approaching death. His delusive hopes now fled, and gloomy despair gath-

ered around him. He desired to see his uncle before he died. His uncle was sent for, who, on hearing of his sudden illness and wretched state of mind, lost no time in going to see him, with a view to administer to the dying youth the consolations of Universalism. But on entering the room where the young man lay, he was struck with horror, on seeing him tossing from side to side on the bed of death, crying out most bitterly, "O my soul, my poor soul! I am ruined, I am ruined!" The captain had but just entered the room, when the young man saw him, and sprang from the bed, and made a rush toward him, crying out, "O uncle! you have ruined me, you have ruined me! If it had not been for your doctrine I should have sought religion; I am now dying and going to hell." As he uttered these words, he fell his length on the floor. The friends laid him on the bed, but he uttered not another word.

The captain was overwhelmed with grief and trouble, and for many months this circumstance was a source of great distress to his mind. After a while a preacher by the name of Coffin visited his family, and inquired about the young man whom he had seen when there formerly. So the captain told him of his sudden death, and the circumstance of his dying in great despair. And he said ever since this had occurred, he had been exceedingly troubled in his mind, lest his system, after all, was unsound, and would not do to depend on in a dying hour. But Mr. C. told the captain that no inference could be drawn from this case unfavorable to Universalism, for, in all probability, the young man was bereft of reason at the time. And he laughed at the captain for being so weak-minded.

This explanation and ridicule of Mr. C. rather soothed the feelings of the captain; he succeeded in a great meas-

ure in throwing off all concern about the salvation of his soul, or the unsoundness of his system. But after about two years he was called to a sick bed, and a dying hour. He then came to his senses, and felt alarmed in view of death. The day on which he died his almost constant cry was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a miserable sinner!" One of his preachers, an old friend of his, hearing of his wretched state of mind, came to see him, and was with him when he died. On witnessing his wretched state of feeling, and hearing him praying so earnestly for mercy, he said to him, "Captain, do be comforted; you have nothing to fear; you are safe; now die like a man. If you go on at this rate, you will ruin our cause." All the reply he could get from the captain was, "O, I am a great sinner! Lord, have mercy on me!" Nothing that the preacher could say could give him any comfort, or elicit any other reply than "Lord, have mercy on me!" And this oft-repeated prayer formed the last sentence that fell from his dying lips.

I recollect that, some twenty years ago, I was sent for to visit a sick man, in the village where I lived, who had been for more than thirty years a professed Universalist. He was a man of business and some standing in society. For several weeks before he died, he had become much concerned about his soul, in view of approaching death. A pious Presbyterian lady, who was there when I went into his room, said to him, "Well, Mr. C., you have been a Universalist a great many years; how do you now feel about it in view of death? Will Universalism do to die by?" Mr. C. replied, "O no! it will not do, either to *live* by or *die* by. I feel myself to be a poor miserable sinner, standing in need of God's mercy." After a little pause he said to me, "I wish you would pray for me." I did

so ; and, from the state of his mind at death, his friends had reason to hope our prayers were heard in heaven.

Now, if Universalism be true, those who believe it are no better off after death than those who deny it. But those who do not dare to trust to it, but seek and find forgiveness of sin, and live a Christian life, will certainly be saved, whether Universalism be true or false. Therefore, let no man depend on Universalism. If other systems fail, and Universalism be true, it will catch us all; but if we rely on Universalism, and that should prove untrue, what system can we hope will save us? Surely none; we must be lost.

#### PRACTICAL ECONOMY.

How did that brother get his property ? I have often heard this inquiry made concerning a certain preacher who is said to possess a few thousand dollars. It is well known that Methodist preachers do not get much more than is needful for their support; and many do not even get that ; therefore, to see one possessed of five or six thousand dollars is somewhat remarkable, and naturally leads to the inquiry, How did he acquire his property?

Now, as I happen to be acquainted with the history of the preacher alluded to, and as an answer to this question may be of some use to some of his brethren, I will undertake to answer it.

1. He did not come in possession of his property by *inheritance*. His parents and relatives were generally poor. His father could give him nothing but a common school education. Very early in life he was thrown upon his own resources ; he had to take care of himself, and, to a considerable extent, for several years, to provide for his aged parents.

2. He did not come in possession of his property by *marriage*, unless it be considered an attainment of property to marry a woman of good sense, and accustomed to the ordinary affairs of a family in her father's house, under the direction of a good mother. If this is marrying rich, then it may be said this preacher married rich, for to such a woman he was married in the twenty-third year of his age, and lived with her thirty-three years. Although she did not bring him over \$150 worth of property, yet I do believe he was to a very considerable extent indebted to her industry, wisdom, and good management.

3. It was not by neglecting his appropriate duties as a minister of the gospel, and entering into speculations in business. His buying and selling has consisted chiefly in *religious books*, which were mostly published at our book room. Some, however, were small works, which were produced by his own pen. He never purchased a horse only when he needed one to carry him to his appointment, and he never sold one only when he had no further use for him, because he was appointed to a station, — and this operation was always with him a losing concern.

4. Nor was it by *gambling*, or by *fraud*. It is true, that, in his younger days, he did, in a few instances, try his fortune in lotteries, but was never among the "lucky," for he never drew half what he expended; and being at length convinced that this lottery business is a species of gambling and downright fraud on the public, that its tendency is evil and only evil, and that no Christian, especially a minister, can have anything to do with it without committing sin, he entirely abandoned that practice. And as to defrauding any one, I

have heard him say that if any man will make it appear that he ever defrauded him, he will restore him ten-fold.

5. Nor yet was it by taking *usury* that he got his property, understanding the word *usury* in its legal sense, that is, "unlawful interest." He received usury in this sense but once, and that was before he entered the ministry. Shortly after he experienced religion, when but a lad, he happened to have the sum of three dollars, and his class-leader told him that if he would loan it to him for three months, he would give him twenty-five cents for its use. He did so; it was the first money he ever had loaned. At the end of three months, the leader sent him his money by the hand of a friend. He opened the paper in which it was carefully wrapped, and, counting it, found all right. It had increased at the rate of about thirty per cent. per annum. This he thought was doing a pretty good business on a small scale. But perceiving that the envelope was the leaf of an old Bible, he thought he would read its contents; and the first passage that caught his eye was the fifteenth Psalm of David, a passage he did not recollect ever to have read. It begins—"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" A pretty interesting question, thought he; let me see how it is answered. So he read on—"He that walketh uprightly," &c., until he came to verse fifth, "He that putteth not out his money to usury." Here he stopped, and was perfectly astonished and confounded. He read it again and again, and said to himself, "Is it possible that I have been doing what God has forbidden, and what will prevent my dwelling in God's holy hill, if I continue to do it? Such was the regard for God's word, and such the tenderness of his conscience, that he felt ashamed, and resolved that he would never do the like again. And

since then, although he has occasionally loaned small sums, he has never received one penny of unlawful interest.

6. Nor did he acquire his property by receiving an abundant salary from the church. Although he has had his full share of good appointments, having been stationed in several of our principal cities, he has seldom received the full amount of his disciplinary allowance, even when in the cities; and when he did, that allowance was always small. I heard him declare, not long since, that in summing up his receipts for the forty years he had labored in the ministry, his salary would not average \$250 a year. It is therefore very certain that his property did not come by means of a liberal salary received from the church.

If the preacher alluded to did not acquire his property by any of the foregoing methods, the question again recurs, How, then, did he obtain it? Well, I suspect there is some secret about this business of which everybody is not fully aware, but still, when known, is very simple and very practicable. The secret, I believe, is contained in one short article, found in what he calls his "Economical Creed." The article reads thus: "I believe every man ought to live within his income." I have heard him say that he adopted this article into his creed very early in life. I recollect that after he became a supernumerary, he told the Conference stewards to put the amount of his claims on the Conference funds into the hands of the mite committee, to be distributed among the necessitous cases; for he said that he had an *old friend* that had for a number of years assisted him, so that he had laid up sufficient means for his own support, without taking this annuity from the Conference. On

inquiry, it was ascertained that this *old friend* to whom he alluded was "Practical Economy."

Being, as I said, thrown upon his own resources in early life, and being obliged to assist his aged parents for several years, he found it necessary to be industrious and saving. Although for nearly three years he regularly paid his aged parents, for their support, *seven dollars* a month, he succeeded in clothing himself, and furnishing himself with books and his travelling equipage. When he commenced travelling, in the twenty-second year of his age, he had laid up \$150. This, together with about the same amount which his wife possessed, was his *stock in trade*. This he kept at interest; to this he added the yearly interest; and at the end of eight years he found he had the sum of \$500. By the advice of a friend, he purchased a small house and lot. This purchase was a fortunate one; for, although it was in the suburbs of a city, its value soon increased, and the annual rent in a few years furnished him with the means of building another house on the same lot. And in a few years more the rent of both enabled him to build another, and yet another.

This article, regulating the expense of living, still remains in his economical creed, and now he is at a time of life when he cannot do the church regular and efficient service, he has the means of being comfortable, without being troublesome to his brethren. He always considered that the amount with which he started would properly belong to his children and to objects of benevolence, and that while he did the church efficient service he was entitled to his support, although he did not always receive it from that quarter.

One fact in domestic economy is well worth remembering; that is, that \$300 at compound interest, at seven

per cent., will accumulate in forty years so as to amount to the sum of \$4,000. When a man has travelled forty years, it is, with most men, about time to retire from effective service; and the income of \$4,000 will make him quite comfortable, with what little he may get from the Conference. If a man by economy could save a little from his salary, and add it to his principal, it would not be at all wonderful if, when he has travelled forty years, he should possess five or six thousand dollars, and thus be comfortable in his old age.

## METHODISM.

## RETROSPECTIVE AND PROSPECTIVE.

Methodism.—Its success.—Causes of success.—Divine influence.—Distinctive doctrines.—Itinerancy.—Special means of grace.—Love-feasts and class-meetings.—Camp-meetings.—Prospective.—Hopes and fears.

The celebrated Dr. Chalmers once said of Methodism, that it is “Christianity in earnest.” This is certainly paying Methodism no small compliment. The world needs a system of religion put into operation that has vitality and divine authority, in order to bring about its conversion. I would define Methodism to be *A religious enterprise regulated by order*. And surely this is what the world needs.

Order is “Nature’s first law.” God has observed order in all his works and ways; and it is absolutely necessary to the success of any enterprise among men. God did not introduce man into the world until he had set the world in suitable *order*. Nor did he awaken man into consciousness by breathing into him an immortal spirit, until he had prepared a suitable body. The tabernacle is set in *order* before its immortal inhabitant enters. The dry bones seen in Ezekiel’s vision were

not animated with life, until bone had been brought to bone, and each adjusted to its proper place: nor even then, until they were tied together by ligaments, and clothed with flesh, and covered with skin. Then, when reduced to suitable order, breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

There is harmonious order in all God's works and ways. The perfect order which is to be observed in the kingdoms of Nature, the ways of Providence, and the dispensations of grace, shows they have one author, and that he is God.

The order observed in the church, or in any religious enterprise, either in doctrines, experience, or practice, which comes nearest to the order observed in the apostolic age, is that order which is most pleasing to God, and is best calculated to insure success. There can be no better model for the church, its ministers and members, either as it respects doctrines or discipline, than that which is presented to us in the Acts of the Apostles. Such ministers as most nearly resemble the apostles in their spirit, manner of preaching, and success, have the fairest claim to boast of being in the apostolic succession. And that church which is most like the apostolic church is nearest right.

The apostle tells us, that, for the edifying of the church, Christ appointed apostles and prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, and by him the whole body is said to be "fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. iv. 16. Here is an arrangement in the church, *made by Christ, compared in several respects to the ani-*

mal economy, in which every part is designed to "effectually work," to secure the enlargement, perpetuity and perfection of the church. For this purpose, apostles were first appointed; that is, men sent by Christ, personally, to act under the new dispensation as prophets acted under the old; viz., to communicate the will of Christ, and establish the divine authority of those doctrines which are to be believed and inculcated, and to teach and enforce those rules of moral discipline which are to be observed in the church in all coming time.

When the apostles had done their work as prophets, revealing the will of Christ, they were to be succeeded, not by other apostles, as some pretend, but by "Evangelists," who should travel and carry abroad the news of this salvation to the Gentile nations, even to the ends of the earth. With these evangelists, there were to be pastors and teachers associated, who should organize churches, and administer the ordinances and discipline which Christ and his apostles had established.

Now, as the distinctive form of Christianity called Methodism was introduced into the world long after the days of the apostolic prophets, it is suitable, therefore, that its ministry should hold its proper place with the successors of the apostles, viz., evangelists, pastors and teachers. And this is the highest dignity to which they lay any claim; and I think it is the highest dignity in the Christian ministry to which any man has had claim since the apostles. To be apostles, was a claim peculiar to the twelve who received authority from Christ, personally, for the work of the apostleship; but to be pastors and teachers may be claimed in common by all ministers of Christ.

I cannot but look upon Methodism as a peculiar organization, for a special purpose, in the providence of

God; and therefore I have called it "a religious enterprise, regulated by order." And I cannot but believe that the order by which it is regulated, if not in all things authorized by a "thus saith Christ, or thus saith his apostles;" yet that in no one instance is it a departure from what they have authorized. All its doctrines are in perfect accordance with God's word, and all its rules of moral discipline are either expressly required by Christ and his apostles, or are fairly inferable from the principles laid down in the Bible.

Our *system of economy*, in carrying on the work assigned us by Providence, is, we think, in accordance with the pattern shown us in the apostolic age. It is a system of general superintendency, from the chief overseer, or bishop, through the various classes of officers, presiding elders, pastors, assistant pastors, — that is, teachers, or class-leaders, — even down to the private members. From the private members, there is a responsibility up through all the officers of government, to the general superintendents, or bishops. The doings of any particular class or society in any place, are subject to a review of a quarterly Conference. The quarterly Conference is amenable to an annual Conference, and the annual Conference is accountable for all its doings to the general Conference. In view of this system, one is almost inclined to think that Ezekiel, the prophet, had a glimpse of Mr. Wesley, and his associates, operating in their grand missionary and itinerating plan of spreading truth and holiness, when he said, "Their work was as a wheel within a wheel, and the spirit of the living creature was in the midst."

Methodism has done much in the world, and, I trust, is destined to do much more. It has done much in England to arrest infidelity and sin, and to awaken zeal and

activity among professed Christians, not only dissenters, but in the established church. It has aroused the attention of vast multitudes of careless sinners, which no ordinary means could do, and resulted in their conversion to God. Such revivals as have attended the labors of our ministers have not been known in any other age of the world since the days of the apostles.

In our own country, during the last half century, wonderful results have followed the labors of our ministers. The increase of our membership shows to a great extent what has been their success. Before the separation between the North and the South, which occurred in 1844, our membership amounted to more than a *million* in these United States; and probably not less than *half a million* have united with other churches who have been awakened through our instrumentality. And may we not calculate that not less than *half a million* have, during that period of time, entered into that rest that remains for the people of God? Eternity alone will reveal, to the full extent, the great success of Methodism.

In those regions where my field of labor has been, over which I have conducted my reader in the foregoing pages, we have greatly enlarged our borders. From small beginnings, our people have increased and spread their influence almost everywhere. Societies have been formed, churches erected, seminaries of learning established, Sabbath schools organized, — and though last, in many places, we are not least among the churches; and at present we share with other denominations in the pleasure of doing good. Our people, as well as they, are carrying the gospel abroad over heathen lands, as well as educating the youth in our own.

When we witness the success of our enterprise, carried

on under so many disadvantages, and by instrumentalities so unpromising, we are very naturally led to inquire into the causes. Our beginning was feeble, and looked upon with contempt. In many places we were ridiculed and opposed by every means which wicked men could devise; and many good men verily thought they did God service by hedging up our way, for they sincerely believed we were misleading the people. To what shall we attribute our great success?

1. The *first* and most effectual cause is, no doubt, *the special blessing of God*. He has been pleased to put an especial honor upon his holy word, and upon his ministers who have preached it. The influence of his Spirit has attended the labors of the ministers, and his word has proved to be a life-giving word, a hammer and a fire to break in pieces. Success has been the result. Without this blessing of God, Paul might plant, and Apollos might water, but both would labor in vain.

2. In connection with this, the *prominence* which we have given to our *distinguishing doctrines* has been a very efficient cause of success. The free-agency of man, general atonement, free salvation, justification by faith, entire sanctification by the renewing influence of the Holy Ghost, and the necessity of final perseverance, are very distinguishing features of our doctrinal system. And these doctrines were the constant theme of our early preachers ever since I can remember. And these are their themes, to a very great extent, at the present day. There is nothing contained in our creed of which our preachers were ever ashamed; they were never afraid to preach any of our doctrines on any suitable occasion. Our doctrines commend themselves, not only to men's consciences, but to their common sense, and are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strong-holds of

the devil. With our views of the divine government and plan of salvation, we can best succeed in undermining infidelity, and in refuting the arguments of Universalism.

3. Our *system of itinerancy* has been another cause of our success. This system has enabled us to follow the tide of emigration as it has flowed on to the West. Our ministers have not waited for the people to organize themselves into societies and give them a call, but they have gone out and called the people. The emigrant has no sooner gotten his log cabin erected, than he finds a Methodist preacher at the door, ready to say, "Peace be to this house." No matter how sparse the population, or how poor the people, our itinerants are among them, to teach the way which leads to a better home in heaven. Our system supplies great multitudes of people with religious instruction, at an expense accommodated to their scanty means. No class of men in all the world have done so much for public good for so small a compensation. In early days, our scanty means made it necessary for us to live very frugally; and to some people whose means were more abundant, we sometimes appeared really *penurious*.

I recollect my presiding Elder came to attend my quarterly meeting once, riding in what was in those days called a "*jumper*," the box of which consisted of a *crate* in which crockery is usually packed. He fitted up this vehicle with his own hands, not because he was covetous, but because he had not the means to furnish himself with anything more elegant. He was an honest man, and was unwilling to run in debt without a probability of paying. He was a *humble* man, and was not ashamed to be seen in this humble style, while it was the best he could well obtain. He covered his *crate* with his *buffalo robe*, and it looked quite respectable.

He was met one day by a gentleman who was a celebrated lawyer, and judge of the superior court. "Well, well," said the judge, "I have now learned a secret for the first time in my life; that is, how Methodist preachers live on so small an income. I see they use economy."

He has been always regarded as a man of *sterling integrity*; he has been honored since then with many of the best appointments in his Conference; he has grown old in the work of the ministry, and to his venerable name D. D. has been attached for many years; and he is worthy of it, and well deserves all the honor bestowed upon him. Frugality sometimes appears very mean to persons who have no occasion for it themselves, but it has been necessary, in many places, to keep up our itinerary.

Our itinerary is of great importance in securing success to our ministry. It is calculated to diffuse the diverse gifts of our ministers through all parts of the work, and is admirably calculated to promote uniformity of views on doctrines and church polity. It may have its disadvantages, as it respects our pastoral relation to our people; but this is made up, to some extent, by another part of our economy, that is, by the appointment of leaders. A class-leader is an assistant pastor, whose business it is to supply, in some measure, the pastor's lack of service. If the leader does his duty, as defined in discipline, in seeing his members and reporting concerning them to the preacher, the preacher cannot fail to become more or less acquainted with them personally or otherwise. And it is probable that when our societies shall become large, so as to need it, it may be deemed expedient to extend the time of ministerial labor to three, or perhaps four, years. This can be done, and yet our itinerary be preserved.

4. Our *special means of grace* have contributed greatly to our success. Besides those which are common to other denominations, there are some which are peculiar to the Methodists. Among these are our *love-feasts* and our *class-meetings*. These are well calculated to promote brotherly love and ardent piety. They have been the means of bringing our people into a more intimate and friendly acquaintance with each other, and of promoting a spirit of true devotion.

And among the special instrumentalities which God has used among us in converting sinners, we may give a prominent place to *camp-meetings*. These originated among our Presbyterian brethren, somewhere, I believe, in Kentucky. They grew out of their sacramental occasions in the time of the great revival of 1800. When circumstances began to attend them which did not exactly suit their views of *order* and *propriety*, they abandoned them. But the Methodists continued to hold them, shook off the *Shakers*, who to some extent had brought them into disrepute, and soon found them attended with great success, in the awakening and conversion of sinners.

The first that was ever held, north of Baltimore, is said to have been held somewhere not far from Croton, N. Y. This was in 1804, at which it is said Rev. N. Snethen preached the first sermon, from 2 Cor. x. 4: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds." And these meetings have been mighty in the hand of God in demolishing the kingdom of Satan among men.

The first I ever attended was held about twelve miles east of Albany, I think in 1805, and the next in Stillwater, in 1806. At this, the venerable Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat were present, and preached.

Camp-meetings were great occasions in those days, and they were very powerful means of doing good. Their influence is great. This is an ordinary occasion when a great host come near to be attracted by entreaty, and having become under the power of truth and the Spirit. On these occasions our mightiest men go forth with their mightiest efforts, and the Holy Spirit arranges with the word with mighty power on the hearts of the weak. It has been sometimes perfectly astonishing to see what a powerful influence has been manifested on some of these occasions. Many of the most semi-hearted sinners that were to be found in all the country, who have attended these meetings to scoff and make disturbance, have been arrested by the Spirit of God under the preaching of the word, and have fallen to the ground like men in battle. In some instances, they have lain for hours perfectly helpless. When they would recover their strength and the power of utterance, they would cry for mercy, and never cease until they found pardon and peace. In many instances, their after life and triumphant death gave good evidence that their conversion, though sudden, was real. Thousands are now living who have been brought to Christ by means of camp-meetings.

For some years past it has been thought that camp-meetings have not been attended with as much success as formerly. They were well suited to the circumstances of the times when they were first introduced; and still, in many instances, they are attended with blessed results, in the conversion of sinners, and especially in the building up of Christians in the faith. But our protracted meetings, as they are usually called, which are held in our churches, have, to some extent, taken their place.

 The simplicity, zeal and perseverance of our minis-

ters have contributed very much to the success of Methodism. They have not, generally, had much to do with *metaphysical subtleties*, or matters of mere *speculation*. Perhaps no class of ministers has excelled ours in insisting on experimental and practical religion, or in aiming to awaken men's consciences. They endeavored to strike at the heart. Their *zeal* and *perseverance* have never been outdone by any class of ministers; they have been ardent and untiring.

As an illustration of this, I will mention a circumstance as it was related to me; and I think it will give a fair specimen of many of the preachers in our early history.

The preacher had an appointment at a place a few miles beyond a creek, that sometimes rose in a few hours to be quite impassable for man or beast. A sudden shower had swelled the mountain torrents, until the creek was quite unsafe to pass. Here the preacher arrived an hour or two before the time to be at his appointment. Some persons on the opposite shore called to him and told him he had not better attempt to cross. But this old veteran knew of no postponement of his work, and he considered that the king's business required haste; therefore, he was not to be arrested by trifles. So, in he plunged; but the current was stronger than he was aware of; it carried him and his horse, in spite of all his efforts, towards a whirling eddy. He had approached so near the opposite shore that he laid hold of a limb of a tree, that hung over the water, but this gave way. He then seized the pommel of his saddle, and cried out with a mighty voice, "O Lord, thou hast promised to take care of thy servants in trouble; it is now about time to be doing something!" After being separated from his horse, and floundering a while in the water, until nearly

dead, the people contrived means to draw him on to the land ; and, after rolling and rubbing him a while, he came to, and the first words he spoke were, "Now, if I had my horse, I could reach my appointment yet."

This was the spirit of zeal and perseverance that animated our early preachers ; they were courageous in their Master's cause ; strong in faith and mighty in prayer, and God was with them. The church has been blest with many men of like spirit, even to the present day.

Thus far, unparalleled success has attended Methodism. The history of the past we know ; but what will be our success in the future, no one knows ; this will depend on the good pleasure of God, who carries forward his purposes by whatever instrumentalities he sees fit to choose. There is no doubt that God raised up Luther and his fellow-laborers to put down the papal power, and reform the church from many of its corruptions and abuses. And it is equally evident that he raised up Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors to bring about a revival of pure religion in the Protestant churches of his day.

But as God has permitted the papal power to again revive, and, in some measure, recover its strength in some parts of the world ; so he may, for aught we know, permit the Protestant churches to fall again into the same state of conformity to the world, in which they were before Methodism arose.

And we cannot be sure that Methodism will continue to retain its distinctive features, and use its peculiar instrumentalities, as heretofore ; or, if it does, we cannot be sure that the same success will always follow. On this point, I think, there is some reason to fear. I do not fear that there will ever be any essential change in our *doctrinal system*, so long as the Bible is acknowledged as

the rule of faith. I have no doubt that our Articles of Religion will always remain the same. But we have some reason to fear that our rules of moral discipline may become somewhat relaxed, to suit the laxity of the times. They may never be altered, so far as they are found expressly contained in the Bible; but the time may come when our ministers will not so strictly administer them as they do at present. I fear this, because I see that some of them are not now as rigidly administered as they formerly were. When Methodism shall have lost its distinguishing spirituality, it will in the same proportion have lost its moral power.

And should we continue to use the same instrumentalities which we have used with so much success heretofore, it is not absolutely certain that the same success will continue to attend them. It is evident that camp-meetings, which heretofore were such powerful means of awakening sinners, have not been, for several years past, attended with the same success as formerly. And even the same kind of preaching, which used to be attended with so much power, does not now produce the same effect. Such are the peculiar circumstances of the times, that even truth itself, in many cases, fails to produce its designed effect. It was so in the days of our Saviour; in some places he could not do many mighty works among the people, because of their unbelief.

There is some reason to fear that our preachers and people will yet fall into the spirit of the times, and become as weak in moral power as some others. We live in an age when the spirit of the world is making great inroads into the church. Our country offers so many facilities for becoming wealthy, and our republican institutions open so many avenues to distinction and honor, that we can scarcely hope to preserve our original sim-

plicity. Wealth will create splendid and costly churches, and these will require popular preachers; under these circumstances the spirit of piety and devotion, which once characterized us, may decline. A generation may rise up by whom class-meetings may not be appreciated, and formality may take the place of true devotion, and the more popular and shining virtues of a Christian's character may take the place of a self-denying and cross-bearing life.

But if Methodism degenerates, or if it fails to accomplish the object for which God introduced it, he will no doubt raise up some other people, and other instrumentalities, to carry forward his merciful designs. Of the *future we know nothing*. Faith in God, and in his promises, is better for us than *foreknowledge* would be.

#### METHODIST EPISCOPACY.

THE visible church of Christ, in the most general sense of this term, is made up of all denominations of Christians who take the Scriptures for their rule of faith and practice, and Christ for their Lord and Lawgiver. Men are not members of the visible church because they are born and educated in a Christian nation; nor because they have been converted, or born again: in order to constitute a church, they must be organized into a society. A visible church is a voluntary association organized for a special purpose, adopting rules and regulations for the maintenance of public worship and Christian ordinances.

The word *ekklesia*, from which our word *church* is derived, is a numerical term which signifies multitude,

congregation, or assembly: and according to its Scriptural use, may be applied to the whole Christian church of all ages, as forming one entire body; or, it may be applied to the whole body of professing Christians in any one age of the world; and with equal propriety it may be applied to any particular number of Christians associated together in church fellowship, in any particular place.

The term *church* is frequently used in the Scriptures in this general sense, and also as frequently in this particular sense. The Scriptures not only make mention of the church as a whole, but also of *churches*:—"The general assembly and church of the first-born"—"the church at Jerusalem"—"the church at Antioch"—"the seven *churches* which are in Asia," &c. These churches were so many Christian assemblies regularly organized, who assembled in those different places where they resided; and each of those assemblies constituted a church to all intents and purposes; and they were as so many branches or integral parts of the catholic or general church of Christ. This view of the Christian church agrees with the definition given of it in the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England: "The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that are requisite to the same." In order to be convinced of the correctness of this view, let the reader examine Acts ix, 31; xx, 17; Gal. i, 2, 22; Col. iv, 15.

Such organizations are still provided for by a general law of our Lord and Lawgiver, the purport of which is, "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness,

is accepted with him ;" and, " Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Under this general provision Christian churches may be organized and enjoy covenant blessings.

The visible church of Christ, therefore, is not confined exclusively to any one particular denomination of Christians, but embraces all who make a public profession of allegiance to Christ, by belonging to some religious organization. These sects or denominations may differ from each other in many things, and yet each may have all that is essential to constitute a Christian church, in the Scripture sense of that term. They may all have some things in common with each other, and each of them may have some things peculiar to themselves. Each may have enough truth to give them vitality, and constitute them one of the branches of the visible church of Christ, and entitle them to the blessings of God's covenant people.

Christians in all ages have, with few exceptions, been agreed in the most essential matters of Christianity ; it has been most generally in minor matters that they have disagreed. And it is so to quite an extent, at the present day. Some denominations agree with each other in doctrinal views, who disagree in their views of church polity. Some prefer the Congregational mode of managing church affairs ; some the Presbyterial, and some the Episcopal. But as neither Christ nor his apostles have laid down any specific rule as to the form of church government, it seems this matter cannot be very essential ; and therefore Christians may differ in their views on this subject, without giving each other any real occasion of offence. The great object or ultimate purpose to be secured in church government, is,

good order. Concerning the best means of obtaining this object, each denomination of Christians is at liberty to judge for itself, and each may innocently prefer its own peculiar views, provided they do not contravene anything taught in the Scriptures.

One of the distinguishing features and peculiarities of Methodism is its Episcopacy. There is no other church at the present day, whose government is Episcopal, which entertains the same views of Episcopacy as the Methodists. A writer in the Established Church of England contends that the church to which he belongs is exclusively right, on the principle that its government is *Episcopal*, inasmuch as the government in the apostolic church was Episcopal. With our views of Episcopacy, we can admit that Episcopacy was apostolic, without being obliged to admit that the Church of England or of Rome is exclusively right, or that presbyterian government is absolutely wrong.

With us, Episcopacy is not an *order* in the ministry, but an *office*. When Mr. Wesley laid his hands on Dr. Coke, he merely set him apart to the office of a general superintendent, or overseer, in the church, which he had, in the providence of God, been instrumental in raising up. In setting the Doctor apart, and appointing him to this work, in the United States, he followed the example of St. Paul, in setting apart Timothy and Titus, and appointing them to a similar work, the one for the purpose of overseeing the church at Ephesus, and the other as superintendent of the affairs at Crete. In both cases it was a presbyterian ordination, an Episcopacy of convenience, adapted to contingent necessities. St. Paul could not well go to Ephesus personally, therefore he appointed Timothy to the office of superintendent, or overseer, to set things in order in that place. For the same

reason Mr. Wesley sent Dr. Coke to America. I see no proof that St. Paul had any more special direction from God to send Timothy to Ephesus, or to leave Titus in Crete, than Mr. Wesley had to send Dr. Coke to America. In making this appointment, he acted, no doubt, according to an enlightened judgment of propriety, and so did Mr. Wesley. St. Paul, in alluding to this arrangement, does not say, "I *commanded* thee, by virtue of my apostolic authority;" but he says, "I *besought* thee to abide still at Ephesus." If St. Paul was an apostle, or a patriarch, to the societies which he had raised up among the Gentiles, and by virtue of the relation which he held to them, as a minister of Christ, was authorized to superintend their affairs and appoint them preachers, so had Mr. Wesley similar authority over the societies which he had raised up; and these societies acknowledged this authority, by receiving the preachers whom he sent. No doubt, the preachers and members of the societies in America as cordially received Dr. Coke and Francis Asbury, acting as joint superintendents, under the authority of Mr. Wesley, as the churches of Ephesus and Crete received Timothy and Titus, appointed by St. Paul.\*

Mr. Wesley, in writing to Dr. Coke, September 10th, 1784, says: "Lord King's account of the primitive Chris-

\* From the fact that history tells us that St. John spent the latter part of his life at Ephesus, it seems most likely that Paul sent Timothy there for a particular purpose, and that when he had accomplished the work, he no longer occupied the office, but took his place as another minister.

The case of Titus, who was left in Crete, strengthens this supposition respecting Timothy. Paul left him in Crete, it is said, "to set things in order and ordain elders;" but he tells him expressly, that when he should send Artemas, or Tychicus, then he must come to him to Nicopolis. This certainly indicates that the office of a bishop was only the setting apart a man, and appointing him to oversee a certain work, and not the creating an *order* in the ministry as permanent as life.

tians convinced me, many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain." Again, he says: "I firmly believe, that I am as much a scriptural *Episcopos* as any man in England, or in Europe, for the uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man did or ever can prove."

If the English hierarchy make a great boast that, when they came out from Rome, they brought Episcopacy with them in their sense of Episcopacy, Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors can say, when we came out from the hierarchy of England, we brought Episcopacy with us, in our sense of that term, and we brought the glorious gospel of Christ with us, in its power. Whether the English clergy did in fact bring their Episcopacy with them, when they left the church of Rome, may be questionable, when we consider that the Romish church expelled the bishops and the clergy of England, and that they took out new credentials from Henry VIII.

I have no doubt that, in the days of the apostles, bishops and presbyters were regarded as belonging to the same ecclesiastical *order*; that they differed only in office. All presbyters were bishops in their respective charges, although not generally so called. But some, being selected to superintend and oversee the work on a larger field, were, for the sake of distinction, called bishops. This is the opinion of Archbishop Cranmer, and many other writers in the English church. (See Macaulay, vol. i., p. 49.)

As proof that bishops were so regarded in the days of the apostles, see the third chapter of the first Epistle to Timothy. Here the word *bishop* is used in connection with the *office* which some elders or presbyters sustained, and yet belonged to the *order* of presbyters, for bishops

and deacons are all the orders which seem to be recognized in this epistle. (See Chap. iii. 1, 2, 8; and see, also, Titus i. 5, 6, 7.) Here Titus was directed to set apart *Elders* in every city, and he is told what characters they must sustain. In stating the reason why elders must sustain such a character, the apostle says, "For a bishop must be blameless." Now, it is evident that he uses the word "elder," (which is the same as the word *presbyter*,) and the word "bishop," as meaning one and the same thing, so far as their ordination or order was concerned.

But as a further proof, let the reader turn to Eusebius, Book v., chap. 24; here he will find a quotation from an epistle written by Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, who was cotemporary with Victor, Bishop of Rome, in the early part of the second century. In an epistle, in which he admonishes Victor, he uses the following language. "And these *presbyters*, who governed the church before Sotu, and over which you now preside, I mean Anicetus and Pius, Aginus, with Telephorus," believed so and so.

On this passage from Irenæus, we may observe three things:

1st. That this is the language of a man of great eminence as a writer; he was the Bishop of Lyons, and cotemporary with Victor, who was then Bishop of Rome.

2. That Irenæus names five of the predecessors of Victor, in the succession of Roman bishops, men whose names are always found in the list of Roman bishops, whenever an attempt is made to trace the regular prelatic succession to St. Peter. And *these bishops Irenæus calls PRESBYTERS*. He, no doubt, regarded Victor and all his predecessors, up to Linus, who is said to be the imme-

diate successor of St. Peter, as nothing more than presbyters or elders, so far as it respects a distinct order in the ministry. They were of the order of presbyters, and, on account of age, talents, or some other reason, had been chosen by their brethren to the office of overseers, or bishops, at Rome.

3. If the bishops of the first century belonged to the *order* of presbyters, then those whom they have ordained must also belong to the same order; for how can a presbyter confer an order higher than the one to which he belongs himself? What, then, are all those diocesan prelates who have derived their orders from Victor and his predecessors at Rome, who were mere parochial bishops? Are they, after all their boast, anything more than presbyters?

It is true, these predecessors of Victor were called bishops, — that is, “overseers,” — and such they were in *office*, but in ministerial grade they were only presbyters. This has ever been the true state of the case with bishops so called, and ever will be. A distinct *order* by this name is wholly an unauthorized innovation in the Christian church. The bishops of Jerusalem, of Antioch, of Rome, of England, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, or of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, or anywhere else under heaven, — what are they in fact? They are elders, or presbyters, appointed as officers to oversee the church as general superintendents.

This was the relation bishops held to the church in the early days of its history, when it had not become connected with wealth, pride, and power. But after a while these *Episcopoi* pretended to be a distinct order in the ministry, divinely constituted, and superior to presbyters. And to make these pretensions respected,

they claimed to be successors of the inspired apostles, and equal with them in ecclesiastical authority. At length the Bishop of Rome, obtaining the ascendancy over all other bishops, declared himself *Pope*, — that is, *Pappa*, or *Father*, the universal father of the Christian church. He considered himself Christ's Vicar-general on earth; and hence the Church of Rome obtained the title of Catholic, or Universal Church, as though Rome was the universe, — all others having to submit to the government of the *Pope*, who at length became a temporal prince, and is such to this day.

But as Mr. Wesley, and the fathers of American Methodism, were not disposed to acknowledge the Pope or the pretensions which he had assumed, so neither were they disposed to take such views of Episcopacy as would lead to any such conclusions, or make such assumptions of the Pope necessary to their authority. But they chose to take the view which the New Testament gives of the church and its ministry in its original organization. They chose to consider Episcopacy not an *order* of divine appointment, essential to the validity of the ministry and existence of a church, but an *office* to which a man may be appointed by his brethren.

#### OUR APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

Our ministry has scriptural credentials which satisfy our people very well. The Saviour has given us a test by which to determine in general who are his true ministers. He says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." He said to his apostles, "I have chosen you and ordained you that you should bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." And he has always retained this prerogative of choosing and authorizing his minis-

ters himself for this work. If men are moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them the work of the ministry, they will bring forth more or less fruit. The fruit of a true ministry will be the conversion and salvation of sinners, the advancement of the cause of truth, and building up of the church of Christ.

So long as a body of ministers find their labors crowned with success in accomplishing the great ends of the gospel, they give good evidence that they are in the order of God, and in the true scriptural apostolic succession, although they may not be able to trace it through the hierarchies of England or Rome.

Methodism is the revival of apostolic simplicity and efficiency. It contends not so much for outward forms and ceremonies, as it does for an inward work of grace on the heart by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and a practical manifestation of this gracious work by a godly life. It leaves the wranglings of theological schools, and the metaphysical subtleties, and goes out among the people preaching Christ and him crucified, holding forth to all a present, free, and full salvation. It appeals to the Bible for the truth of its doctrines and the correctness and authority of its discipline. And it must be acknowledged that its unparalleled success, in the conversion of sinners, has given the world good evidence that it is an object of divine favor.

The conversion of sinners, which has followed the labors of our ministers to such an extent for so many years, we cannot but regard as good evidence of the validity of our ordination and ministerial authority. Hitherto we have been able to vindicate our Episcopacy and apostolic succession, without calling to our aid the fable of prelatical succession through the English or Romish Church. Our letters of commendation are read

and known of all men with whom our ministry has proved successful in accomplishing their salvation. They are living epistles of commendation.

Should the time ever come when our ministry shall so far depart from the simplicity of the gospel as to lose its power in bringing sinners to Christ, we may perhaps find it necessary to seek some other ground to establish its validity. If the religion of the M. E. Church should degenerate into mere forms and ceremonies, and on this account we should lose our hold on the consciences and confidence of the community, and God should raise up another people to the work first assigned to us, we may then be glad to invent some vain pretence to establish our superior claims, and make men believe there is no salvation out of our church. But I pray that such a time may never come in our history.

I have no fear for Methodism while our ministers retain a strong religious feeling in their hearts, and adhere to the truth in the spirit of simplicity and faith. As the circumstances of society around us change, our ministry may be less successful in the aggressive form, in many places, but I trust it will never be without fruit that will redound to the glory of God.

#### THE GOVERNMENT OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

The government of the Methodist Church is Episcopal — that is to say, under the general superintendency of bishops, or, as they are called in Greek, *Episcopoi*, and is a system of superintendency throughout.

Since its organization in 1784, the ministry of this church is originated in the following manner. When a person thinks he is called to preach, he usually commences by exhortation, and in order to this, he must be

approved by the class of which he is a member. Upon this recommendation the preacher in charge may give him license to exhort. In order to obtain license to preach, he must obtain a recommendation of a leader's meeting, or of the society of which he is a member, when a quarterly Conference may authorize the presiding Elder to give him license as a local preacher. The quarterly Conference, which decides this matter, is composed of the travelling and local preachers, exhorters, stewards, and leaders, belonging to the circuit or station.

When a local preacher becomes eligible to be ordained a deacon or an elder, he must be recommended by a quarterly Conference, of which he is a member, to an annual Conference; and if the annual Conference approve of him, he may be ordained by the bishop. Such a recommendation is also necessary when a local preacher wishes to become a member of the travelling connection.

Thus it will be seen that our ministry originates with our people,—that is, that no man can be recognized among us a preacher, or minister, until the laity approve of him and recommend him. In this way our preachers are approved by our people, and in this way our annual Conferences are constituted.

The annual Conferences constitute a General Conference, by their delegates, whom they appoint to meet once in four years. The General Conference elects the bishops, or general superintendents, who have the general supervision of the church, in the interim of the General Conference. The bishops are amenable to the General Conference. Thus, our government originates with the people, and is a government of superintendency, from the bishop or overseer to the class-leader, the lowest officer; and there is an accountability through all the grades of

superintendents up to the General Conference. It is, therefore, called *Episcopal*, which means superintendency, or overseeing.

Some object to our ecclesiastical economy, because they think it does not harmonize with the civil government of the United States, and of the several States of the Union. In reply to this, we admit that, in forming our rules of discipline, we have not aimed to copy after any civil or political institutions whatever, either in this country or elsewhere; and for this we have several reasons to assign.

I. Civil and political institutions differ in their origin from ecclesiastical institutions. They originate with men—with politicians. They differ according to the different circumstances in which men are placed, and the different views which men may happen to entertain. Hence the diversity of forms of civil government among the nations of the earth.

If the government of the church must be modeled after the civil governments, I would like to know which among the various forms shall be the model. Shall we imitate a monarchy, an aristocracy, or a republican form? Who shall determine this question? Is it answered, they who are to be governed? This plan seems somewhat specious, but several difficulties would be connected with it. 1st. Such a course would be unauthorized by the Scriptures. 2d. Such a course would introduce a variety of administration in the same church, and this would necessarily tend to confusion and division in the church. On this principle, no church could maintain any unity, or preserve brotherly love. And, 3d. Such as might hereafter unite with us could complain that they had no hand in making our rules.

As Christ was not of the world, so neither is his church

of the world. His followers are not to take the maxims of the world for their rule, nor the practice of the world for their example. The maxims of Christ and the practices of the apostles and first Christians are to be regarded as the rule and model for Christians, both ministers and members, in all ecclesiastical matters. Although it is not pretended that any specific mode of church government is contained in the Scriptures, and although it is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places and among all denominations be the same, yet all rules of moral discipline must originate with the Christian Lawgiver,—that is, with Christ, not the members of the church.

II. Another reason why the church is not bound to conform to the theory of any civil government, is, that the nature and design of church government are essentially different from the nature and design of civil government, and therefore the institutions of the one cannot be suitable and proper for the other. This difference exists in the following particulars:

1. Civil government possesses power to make laws as well as to execute them; but there is no scriptural warrant authorizing the church to originate laws for the regulation of the moral conduct of its members.

2. Those who live under civil government, whether it be monarchical or republican, are bound to obey the laws, however objectionable or even oppressive they may be, or abide the penalty.

3. Civil government secures the safety and provides for the welfare only of those who are under its jurisdiction.

Now, in all these particulars, church government differs very materially; at least, this is the case with the government in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The

General Conference, its highest judicatory, by a pretty unanimous vote, disavowed the right of legislating for the church, at its session in 1828. All the right it has ever claimed, is to devise the best means to carry the laws of Christ, the Christian Lawgiver, into effect. This business, we think, is allotted to her ministers as a part of their appropriate work. This work they have no right to delegate to the laity, nor ought the ministry to be controlled by the laity in this matter. Preaching the Gospel, administering the ordinances, and governing the church by administering the rules of moral discipline, according to the Scriptures, is a work belonging to the ministry.

When the church recognizes men as their ministers, they must recognize them as the ministers of Christ authorized to do their appropriate work. This authority is *untransferable* and *indivisible*. Our ministers claim only the right to do the work assigned them by the Head of the Church; they claim no right to control the consciences of others. All who come under their pastoral care do it voluntarily. The rules by which they agree to be governed are not acts of ecclesiastical legislation, any more than rules of court are legislative enactments. They are simply prudential regulations by which laws are to be carried into effect. The laws are transcribed from the Bible; the ministers neither claim nor exercise any legislative power, so far as Christian morals are concerned.

It should be distinctly observed, that persons are not born into our church, and, therefore, members unavoidably, as they are under civil government. No one is in any way forced to come under our economy, and no one is obliged to remain under it one day longer than he

chooses. Therefore, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, no one can complain of tyranny.

A wise and energetic government is of great importance. There is scarcely anything that contributes to the welfare of a nation more than a well-regulated and energetic government; and this is of equal importance in the church. One reason, among many others, which may be assigned for the unparalleled success of Methodism in the world, is found in the excellency of its rules of church government. But there is scarce anything among us to which some of our enemies are more opposed than these very rules. While they walk about our Zion, and behold our strong bulwarks, and count our towers, they despair of conquest, unless they can persuade us to abandon these our strongholds. They would be pleased if, like Samson, we would lie quiet, that they might shave our locks, that we may become weak as others. But neither our ministers nor our people are willing to abandon rules which are authorized by Scripture and the usages of the primitive church, nor to give up a form of government, which, for so long a time, has worked so well, and has been so successful in accomplishing the desired object, the conversion of sinners, building up the church, and preserving order and harmony among its members.

The government of the Methodist Episcopal Church has provided *courts of appeal* in order to secure the administration of justice to its ministers and members as far as it may be done. Private members are accountable to their brethren who compose the class, society, or church where they belong. If a member is dissatisfied with the decision in case of his expulsion, he may appeal to a quarterly Conference of official members. A local preacher is accountable to a quarterly Conference, and

in case of expulsion he may appeal to an annual Conference of travelling preachers. A travelling preacher is accountable to an annual Conference, and may appeal to a General Conference, composed of delegates from all the Conferences in the church. The bishops are amenable to the General Conference, both for their official and moral conduct; but there is no appeal from its decision, for there is no higher judicatory. If there is any hardship in our system of church government, it falls heaviest on its chief officers; and, for the general safety of the church, there I think it ought to fall; for when great power is placed in the hands of any man it should always be well guarded by suitable checks and restraints.

Our ecclesiastical government is very energetic, as it should be; among us cases of delinquency can be decided with great despatch, and the church be soon rid of improper members. The power to administer its rules is lodged where the Scriptures have lodged it, and our members have no more occasion to complain of its abuse than members of other churches have. With so many restraints thrown around it, there is but little danger of abuse,— all abuses will correct themselves.

#### METHODIST ITINERANCY.

Methodist Itinerancy is a system of aggressiveness on the powers of darkness. It is the angel of God flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach. It is, to some extent, the fulfilment of the prediction that "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." It is well calculated to do this work,—a work which a local ministry could never accomplish. It is in perfect accordance with the divine commission, "Go into all the world, and preach the gos-

pel to every creature." It is a work which has apostolic example.

Our system of Itinerancy does not wait for wicked men to become converted and organized into churches, and in that capacity call us to come and be their pastors, and preach and administer to them the ordinances. But it leads the way and invites the people to follow. It goes into all the world, wherever it can find access, whether among the savage or the civilized, the rich or the poor, to warn men and teach them the way of salvation. When men become awakened, and desire to flee the wrath to come, we form them into societies, and when they have been suitably instructed, and give evidence of their conversion, we organize them into churches, and bring them under the discipline of the gospel, according to the example of the apostles.

Our system of Itinerancy constitutes our travelling ministers true evangelists, and places us necessarily in the relation of pastors to our societies. It necessarily places the rule and government of the church, which these societies constitute, in the hands of the ministry, precisely where it should be, and where Christ placed it, and where it was in the days of the apostles.

Whatever advantages a republican government may possess in civil society, we are not to look upon the Christian church as being a republic, where men may choose their chief magistrate to preside, and all the subordinate officers to make and administer their laws. The Christian church is a kingdom, and Christ is King in Zion, and his ministers are his officers to teach his doctrines and administer his laws. He is the only Lord and Lawgiver; he appoints his officers and assigns them their work. We act under his appointment and authority, and not by the authority of the people; we are

accountable to him for the doctrines we preach ; we call the people, they do not call us.

So far as our call to the ministry is concerned, we are independent of the people ; that is a matter between God and us ; but whether we shall be acknowledged as ministers, and become their pastors and teachers, depends on the people to whom we preach. Our ministry depends wholly on the people for its pastoral relation and its pecuniary support. If the people refuse to be organized into a church, we cannot sustain the relation of pastors, nor claim our pecuniary support, nor are they under any obligation to us, nor have we any claim on them. The Methodist Episcopal Church, like all other churches, is a voluntary association.

Our system of Itinerancy cannot permit the people to choose what particular minister shall be their pastor in any particular place. Nor can it permit the ministers to choose what particular circuit or station shall be the field of their labor. If the people in the different circuits and stations were to choose their own particular pastors, it might happen that several circuits or stations might choose the same man at the same time. In such cases all must be disappointed except one. And upon this plan, it is likely that none but the most popular would be chosen to any place ; in this way hundreds of our most pious and useful ministers would find no place to work, because they were not the most popular. And it might happen that ministers might be chosen where they would not like to go ; this would be likely to occur as often as it now does, when appointed by the bishops.

Why should the people have any more right to choose their ministers than the ministers to choose their people, or field of labor ? Have ministers no rights ? But if ministers should choose their field of labor it

would be natural to suppose that the cities and most desirable places would be chosen by many more ministers than they would need, and other places, less desirable, where men's souls, however, are equally valuable, would be left destitute, for none would choose them. Or some men would choose places for which they might be very unfit, and very unacceptable to the people. The people choosing their minister, or the minister choosing his people, would soon completely destroy our Itinerancy.

The system of Itinerancy necessarily implies an appointing power, and this appointing power must be vested in a committee, or some one individual person. It could not be vested in a committee without great inconvenience.

1. This committee would not only have the power to appoint others to their field of labor, but also to appoint themselves.
2. Such a committee could not avoid being constantly exposed to charges of partiality and feelings of retaliation.
3. Such a committee would be no better judges of men adapted to places, or places adapted to certain men, than one man could be when guided by a committee of presiding elders, as our superintendents now are.

Some have thought our plan of Itinerancy would be improved, if there might be an appeal made to the Conference when any brother felt himself injured by the bishop in his appointment. This point was once discussed in General Conference, in 1792. Mr. O'Kelly brought in a resolution to change the existing economy of the church, and this plan was embraced in it; but it was rejected by a very large majority, and for very good reasons. Who does not see, upon one moment's reflection, in what a ridiculous light such an appeal to the

Conference would place the bishops, and the preachers also; and what utter confusion it must throw through all our operations!

Let us look at the practical workings of this improvement in our system of Itinerancy. A preacher thinks himself injured in his appointment; so he comes before the Conference and says, "Brethren, I think the bishop has done me an injury in giving me this appointment, and I object to going to it." Very well, brother, says the Conference, if *you think* so you need not go there; the bishop shall send another in your room. So the bishop is obliged to appoint another in his place, and one who, perhaps, is well satisfied with his station; *he* may think himself injured in being obliged to give up his appointment to satisfy the caprice of another, and he may also appeal to the Conference; and thus there would be no end to trouble.

How can a preacher know that an appointment will be an injury to him before he makes the trial? And how can the Conference know, when four-fifths, perhaps, of its numbers may not only be ignorant of the station, but also of the preacher? Certainly one man can become better qualified to judge in such cases, than so large a body of men.

Our system of Itinerancy is undoubtedly the best that can be devised to meet the wants and wishes of the church. Our bishops, as general superintendents, possess the appointing power. They are chosen and authorized to do this work by the General Conference, composed of delegates representing the entire ministry throughout the church. To this ministry they are amenable through their delegates for the manner in which they use this power. At each annual Conference some one of these bishops presides, and the presiding elders

of each Conference, who know all the men that are to be appointed, and all the places that are to be supplied, constitute his council to advise. He has the sole appointing power, and for its abuse he alone is responsible. If he should in any case abuse this power, he is easily reached through the delegates, to whom he is responsible for his *official acts*, as well as for his *moral conduct*.

Our system of Itinerancy is one of the distinguishing features of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America; and it has worked exceedingly well for nearly a century. Neither preachers nor people would, on any account, consent to have it essentially changed. If there be any hardships connected with it, they fall heaviest on the ministry. To them it is indeed a system of considerable sacrifice; but, in general, they do not complain. They regard it as in perfect accordance with the commission of Christ to his apostles, and in conformity with apostolic example. They are fully satisfied that this system is best calculated to spread the gospel through the world, and save the greatest number of sinners.

Of this system our people have very little reason to complain, for it best accomplishes the design of the gospel, and makes the variety of talent in the ministry most available to the church by their frequent changes. If any society should have a man of inferior talents sent to them, or a man unsuited to the place, they are not obliged to quarrel him away, or hire him to depart, as some churches have done; the system itself may free them of the burden at the end of one year. His removal does not at all disgrace him; he may, perhaps, be very suitable for some other place.

Our system of Itinerancy has been attended with great success, and thereby afforded great compensation for the sacrifices our ministers have been called to make. It is

a matter of unspeakable delight to them to see the blessing of God crowning their labors with success in awaking and converting sinners, and in the organization and prosperity of churches through their instrumentality.

A man takes his appointment to a field of labor where he can expect but few comforts for himself or his family, among a people where but little is known about God or religion; where the Sabbath is not regarded; where the people are profane, and haunts of wickedness abound. Here no prayers are heard in all their dwellings; quarrelling, gambling, litigation, and drunkenness, are seen in every direction. But he finds access to a private room, or perhaps a school-house, in which to preach, and here he lifts up his voice like a trumpet; he attacks their beloved vices; he shows the depravity of the human heart, warns them to flee the wrath to come, and holds up Christ, and a full and free salvation. At first he may indeed be despised by the rich, ridiculed by the gay and voluptuous, insulted and persecuted by the mob; but divine truth, accompanied by the Holy Spirit, finds way to the heart; men's consciences are awakened, and here and there the inquiry is made, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Soon this faithful minister of Christ has the pleasure of witnessing a great reformation in the manners and lives of the people. Many are converted, and, instead of profane swearing, prayer and praise are heard in every dwelling, a church is organized, a place of worship is erected, a Sabbath school is established, and the phase of society becomes completely changed.

Here the workings of the itinerant system are seen; it has made an aggression on the powers of darkness; they have yielded to the mighty force of truth, and the *result is, that many are thereby brought to walk in the*

path of life. Surely a minister can well afford to make some sacrifices of worldly interests and worldly ease, to have the pleasure of being the honored instrument of bringing so much good to man, and so much glory to God.

## PREDESTINATION.

The doctrine of Predestination, or belief that all events that ever take place were eternally foreordained of God, and that all the circumstances connected with them were so arranged that these events will necessarily and unavoidably take place, is a doctrine of great antiquity. Some have supposed that it originated with John Calvin, or St. Augustine; but this is no doubt a mistake; it existed previous to either of them; it was only introduced by them among Christian doctrines, and baptized with a Christian name. It was evidently borrowed.

This doctrine holds a prominent place in Mohammedanism. The false prophet inculcated it among his followers, in order to inspire them with a martial spirit, so necessary for the propagation of his religion by means of the sword. If he could make them believe that their death, as to the time and manner of it, together with all the circumstances leading to it, or in any way calculated to bring it about, were eternally foreordained, he would thereby inspire them with courage, and make them valiant soldiers.

It would seem, however, that Mahomet was not the inventor of this doctrine, for it may be traced to an earlier date. It probably had its origin in heathenism. It is well known that Zeno, a stoic philosopher, taught this doctrine about three hundred years before Christ. And it was a notion which prevailed among the heathen in

the days of Lucian, for he alludes to it in one of his dialogues. He introduces Minos, a judge of hell, as about to pass sentence on a certain murderer, who had been brought before him; but the culprit begs permission to ask a few questions before sentence is passed. These questions are proposed on the principle that all the actions of men were foreordained by the Fates. That they were all foreordained the judge admitted. But upon this principle the murderer so ingeniously justified himself from all blame that the judge was compelled to acquit him, and said, as he dismissed him, "I perceive thou art a cunning wight, and thou shalt enjoy the benefit of thy cunning. I will let thee go; but see to it that thou teach not the other dead to ask such questions, for they would prevent the infliction of any punishment in future."

It is not very wonderful that such men as Zeno and other pagans, who were destitute of divine revelation to any great extent, should form wrong notions of the Deity, or of the principles of the divine government, especially when it is considered how natural it is for fallen nature to desire to rid itself of blame, and cast it elsewhere, on chance, or fate, or the gods, or other men. This would be exceedingly natural for a heathen; it is the effect of the fall. This disposition developed itself in fallen Adam, and in Eve, when their Maker inquired why they had eaten of the forbidden fruit. And we see this disposition manifesting itself in some of the wicked Jews in the days of Jeremiah, the prophet. It seems they believed in decrees, and attempted to justify themselves; but the Lord reproved them, "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, &c., and come and stand in this house, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?" Thus they

endeavored to justify themselves for their wickedness, by charging it all to the decrees of God, who, they pretended, had ordained that they should do thus and so, and they could not avoid it. But hear how God reproves them: "Behold," says he, "ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit." This was as much as saying that it was false that God had delivered them to do those abominations, by decreeing from all eternity that they should do them. This declaration of God decides this matter; and it is equally false that God has delivered any man to do abominations, by having eternally decreed whatever comes to pass. "If any man is left to hardness of heart, to believe a lie, that he may be damned, it is because he has taken pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Cor. ii. 10, 11, 12. This notion of decrees is utterly inconsistent with moral liberty, man's accountability, and future punishment. Neither reason nor Scripture affords it any support.

It was certainly very unfortunate that John Calvin ever introduced this heathen notion of predestination into Christian theology. Its consequences have been exceedingly deleterious, inducing no doubt thousands to believe themselves justifiable for their wickedness, considering their sins the result of the divine decrees which eternally foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. His conduct was like the sons of the prophets of whom we read. They went out to gather herbs, and, instead of healthful viands, they gathered "wild gourds" and threw them into the pot; but when they came to eat them, they found they were poisonous, and exclaimed, "O man of God, there is death in the pot!"

This doctrine of predestination has most certainly introduced death into the church. Multitudes have been ruined by its influence. It is a deadly poison. It natu-

rally tends to relieve men from a sense of responsibility and blame, and furnish them with an excuse for their wicked conduct. It is difficult to perceive how a man who believes it, can feel a sense of guilt, or a fear of future punishment.

1. How can the actions of men be *wrong*, if they are precisely as God eternally decreed they should be? Did he not decree them to suit himself, and according to his will? Do not his *will* and his *law* harmonize? If he decreed all events to suit himself, must they not harmonize with his law, — for what is law, but a revelation of his will? But what is sin? The apostle says it is a “transgression of the law.” If all events are according to God’s will, and his *will* and *law* harmonize, where is there any transgression? If his decrees are according to the good pleasure of his will, he must be pleased with seeing them fulfilled. Can it be wrong to do what pleases God?

2. If absolute predestination be true, men’s actions are *unavoidable*, — men act from *necessity*, and are not *free*. To say, as some do, that God has eternally decreed whatever comes to pass, yet in such a way that man is a free moral agent, is only to trifle. It is like saying that ten times four make nine hundred and fifty, yet in such a way that four times ten make only forty. The thing cannot be. If God absolutely decreed all events from eternity, all events are *unavoidable*, and were so eternally. What is the use of trifling?

3. If God decreed all events, and sin exists in consequence of that decree, then God is the *author of sin*, for he decreed it, and it is the necessary and unavoidable result of that decree. How can men feel guilty for that of which God is the author? Or how can he punish men eternally, for doing what he eternally decreed they should do? *Is God unjust?*

## ELECTION AND REPROBATION.

The doctrine that a certain definite number of the human family were from all eternity elected to salvation, and all the rest of mankind were reprobated to damnation, and that the number of each is so certain and definite that it cannot be increased nor diminished, is a distinguishing and prominent doctrine in the system of Calvinism. This is certain, if by Calvinism is meant the system taught in the writings of John Calvin, and the confessions and creeds which have been published by the General Assemblies and General Associations of Presbyterians and Congregationalists. To deny this would evince a degree of ignorance rather disgraceful to any man pretending to know anything about the matter.

Among our Calvinist brethren, there are some who contend for election without saying anything about reprobation, and some who even deny reprobation, declaring that all may come to Christ and be saved who will. But this is a mere evasion, for *election necessarily implies reprobation*, and it would be a denial of their own creed, which expressly says, "the rest of mankind God was pleased to pass by, and ordained them to dishonor and wrath."

The most plausible way of stating the matter of election and reprobation, by our Calvinist brethren, is this: "The human race," say they, "stands before God as a race of miserable sinners, all under sentence of condemnation, — all equally exposed to God's eternal displeasure. God is under no obligation to save any of them; but, of his infinite mercy, he determines to save some of them. So, without any reference to their character or anything else in them, he elects a certain definite number to salvation, and sets them apart for himself. The others he

passes by, making no provision for them, but leaves them to suffer the just demerit of their crimes." "Now," say they, "had not God a perfect right to extend mercy to a part, without bringing him under obligation to extend it to all?" "He might in justice have passed all by. He does those no harm, therefore, whom he did pass by, because they deserved it, and that he saved any was a mere act of grace."

This mode of stating the question and reasoning on the subject seems very plausible; but if we carefully examine it, we shall see that it is very fallacious.

1. How came the human race in this state of sin and condemnation? Was it not, according to Calvinism, brought about by God's eternal decree, millions of ages before they were born? Surely it was, if he eternally and unchangeably decreed whatever comes to pass.

2. How could the human race avoid being in this state of sin and condemnation, if God had so determined it from all eternity? Could they do otherwise than God had absolutely determined they should do? If they acted according to his will, wherein were they to be blamed? Could they change an *unchangeable* decree?

3. It does not relieve the matter to say that they sinned voluntarily; for if they did sin voluntarily, he eternally decreed that they should sin voluntarily. No matter how they sinned; if God decreed whatever comes to pass, they sinned in exact conformity to his unchangeable decree. They were brought into this sinful condition to display his grace in saving some, and glorify his justice in damning others.

But look at the inconsistency and absurdity of this view of election and reprobation. How could the elect be in a state of sin and condemnation, if they were chosen *from all eternity* to salvation? They must have been

eternally in God's favor, and of course could not be subsequently under condemnation. They must have been eternally God's dear children. How, then, could they have been exposed to his wrath? And if the reprobates were under God's eternal malediction, for sins which he had eternally decreed they should commit, they would certainly be more the objects of pity than blame. To pass by and make no provision for sinners, who have personally and voluntarily sinned, would indeed be doing them no injustice. This God has done to the angels who kept not their first estate. But the case is very different, when God is represented as ordaining a certain portion of mankind to dishonor and wrath, for committing sins which he eternally ordained they should commit. Reason and common sense revolt at this monstrous doctrine.

This view is inconsistent with the general tenor of the Holy Scriptures. They teach us that Christ died for all; but this teaches that he only died for the elect. And, indeed, his death for them was wholly unnecessary, for, being eternally elected to salvation, they never were in any danger of being lost, for their number cannot be diminished. The Scriptures offer salvation to all; but this doctrine teaches that neither are any other than the elect redeemed by Christ; then is salvation offered to those whom Christ did not redeem. The Scriptures represent sinners as being punished for doing what they might have avoided; but this doctrine teaches that they are damned for doing what God decreed they should do; for it says, "God decreed whatsoever comes to pass." It came to pass that they sinned, and God is said to have ordained them to dishonor and wrath, "for their sin!" How could they avoid what God had eternally decreed they should do?

suppose any such distrust between the Father and the Son, or any possibility of failure on the part of either, as to render a covenant between them necessary? If the Father and the Son were two distinct beings, and therefore two parties, as the idea of a covenant supposes, they are beings so holy, just, and good, that they would not need to enter into a covenant with each other to bind them to the performance of their respective parts in the great business of man's salvation.

4. This idea of a covenant between the Father and the Son is too *mercenary*, — it is too much like a business transaction between interested parties, to comport well with the idea of *grace*. Here the Son of God is represented as offering to work and suffer for the good of man, if the Father will pay him well for it; and the Father is represented as willing to do so, and accordingly promises to give him a certain definite number of mankind, even all whom he had eternally elected to salvation, to be his servants here, and his associates hereafter, who will be disposed to crown him Lord of all. These he will freely give him, provided he will bind himself in a covenant to take upon him human nature, and endure a certain amount of suffering to redeem them from the curse of his broken law. Now, in all this business transaction, where are *infinite goodness* and *free grace*?

5. This covenant of grace, or particular election of a certain definite number which cannot be increased, necessarily implies an absolute reprobation of all the rest of mankind, — a doctrine which all must believe who believe in election. But this doctrine is wholly inconsistent with the general atonement, which is taught in the Bible, and the general invitations of the gospel. What propriety would there be in Christ's dying for all mankind, if God had from all eternity reprobated the largest part of

them from the covenant of grace, and, by decreeing from all eternity whatever comes to pass, had decreed they should sin, and then, because they would sin, he from all eternity unchangeably foreordained them to dishonor and wrath? Of what use could the "general atonement" be to the non-elect? Or what propriety would there be in "general invitations," if the number of the elect cannot be increased?

6. But what renders this idea of the covenant of grace most objectionable, is, that it is wholly unsupported by the Scriptures of truth. There is not one passage in all the Bible, when properly understood, that gives it any support.

The passage to which reference is most commonly made, is found in Ps. ii. 8: "I shall give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." See John xvii. 2. On this passage I will make a few remarks.

1. If this text alludes to a covenant of peculiarity which secures the salvation of all who are embraced in it, then *Universalism* is true, for it embraces *all men*, the "heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth." Are *all men*, then, to be saved by this covenant of grace? Yes, surely, if it be indeed a covenant which secures salvation.

2. But it is immediately added, in the 9th verse, that he shall "break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel." Now, this declaration shows that the text does not refer to any covenant of grace made between the Father and the Son, for no one will suppose that those embraced in such a covenant are to be broken with a rod of iron, or dashed in pieces as a potter's vessel. It is, therefore, evident that this text has no reference whatever to any such covenant of grace, but

is designed to teach us the universal sovereignty of Christ over all the nations of the earth, and what will be the fate of his enemies who refuse to submit to his government.

The Bible nowhere teaches that any such covenant of grace was ever made between the Father and the Son. All the covenant of grace which the Bible speaks of, was made between God and man. Mankind sinned against God, and God so loved the world that he gave his Son to be the Mediator of a new covenant which he was disposed to make with man, — a covenant of grace. The first covenant made with holy Adam promised happiness on condition of perfect obedience; but the second covenant, of which Christ is the Mediator, promises to sinful man pardon and salvation, on condition that he will repent and believe in Christ. The first covenant is suited to innocent and holy beings; the second, to sinful beings, such as men are since the fall. This may be called a covenant, because God proposes what he will do for man, on certain conditions; and all who will enter into this covenant, by complying with its conditions, shall share its benefits. This business is carried on betwixt God and men, by Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Mediator. It is a gracious covenant — 1st, because it was an infinitely gracious act of God in proposing such terms to man. His love was its originating cause. 2d, because it is by divine assistance that the sinner is enabled to comply with the conditions of the covenant by which its blessings are secured. According to the covenant of grace, through the redemption and mediation of Christ, God can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. And, according to this covenant, he can be good and merciful, though he punish with everlasting destruction every impenitent sinner who rejects Jesus Christ and will not believe on him.

## ON JACOB AND ESAU.

As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. — Rom. ix. 13.

## CALVINISTIC EXPLANATION.

Jacob was of that definite number of God's elect, which cannot be increased nor diminished. His name was written in God's book, and God loved him from all eternity. But Esau, his brother, was of that number whom God from all eternity passed by, and ordained to dis-honor and wrath, for their sins which he eternally de-creed they should commit. His name not being found in God's book of life, he eternally hated, — that is, ab-solutely abhorred, — him, and eternally decreed to make him infinitely miserable to all eternity.

According to the above explanation, this passage teaches the doctrine of unconditional election and rep-robation.

## ARMINIAN EXPLANATION.

Jacob and Esau were brothers. They were the pro-genitors of two great nations, the Israelites and the Edomites. It is written respecting them and their pos-terity, in Mal. i. 2: "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob, and hated Esau, and laid his mountain and heritage waste." To these words of Malachi, the apostle alludes when he says, "as it is written." But this account of them was not written by the prophet from all eternity, nor even before they were born; but it was written in the year of the world 3697, about 1439 years after they were born, and 1292 years after they were both dead and buried.

In this passage in Malachi the prophet alludes to Jacob and Esau, not in reference to their future state in heaven or hell, nor to them personally as to their condition in this life; but he refers to them in reference to their pos-

terity, the Israelites and Edomites. This is evident from two considerations:

1. We have no account that Esau, in his own person, had any mountain laid waste; but his posterity, the Edomites, had. See verse 3d.

2. It is evident, from what is said of them before they were born. See Gen. xxv. 22, 23. When their mother went to inquire of the Lord concerning them, she was told that "two nations and two manner of people should come forth from her," and that the "elder should serve the younger." Now, this must have referred to their posterity, or that promise was never fulfilled, for no such servitude was ever rendered on the part of Esau to Jacob, personally. But such servitude was rendered by the posterity of Esau to the Israelites. See Gen. xxvii. 40, compared with 2 Kings viii. 20.

Now, if the prophet did not allude to the eternal state of Jacob and Esau, so neither did the apostle in Rom. ix. This hatred towards Esau and his posterity was not absolute hatred, but only *comparative*, — that is, love in a less degree; — that kind of hatred which is required of a man toward his father and mother, his wife and children, in order to be Christ's disciples. He must love them less than he loves Christ. In this sense, Jacob is said to have hated Leah. He did not abhor her; neither must a man abhor his father and his mother. So, neither did God abhor Esau from all eternity, before he had done any evil.

If God ever abhorred Esau personally, or any other sinner, it was not because he had eternally reprobated him, but because he had personally and voluntarily sinned. For aught the Bible teaches, Esau had as good a chance to be saved as Jacob, and certainly, in early life, he appeared the best man of the two. If Esau pro-

fanely sold his birthright, it was Jacob who wickedly purchased it. Both needed conversion to make them good men. I know not but we have as much reason to believe that Esau is saved, as we have that Jacob is saved.

It is objected that the apostle declares Esau to be a *profane person*, which is equivalent to his being an eternal reprobate. Not quite; for he tells us what constituted his profaneness, viz., selling his birthright — not his eternal reprobation. This was a legal profaneness, which forever disqualified him to officiate as the priest of God. But was this act unpardonable?

I am also aware that the apostle says Esau "found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." But any man, who will carefully read Gen. xxvii. 34—38, will perceive that it was in his father Isaac he sought to find repentance, but could not. He wished his father to repent of having given the blessing of the first-born to Jacob, his younger brother. He entreated Isaac to give the blessing to him; but although he cried with an exceeding bitter cry, his father would not *repent*, but said, "I have blessed him (Jacob) and he shall be blessed."

That Esau repented of his sin of selling his birthright, and all his other sins, is certainly possible; and we have some reason to think he did. I know of no passage of Scripture that proves the *absolute personal election* of Jacob to eternal life, or that Esau was *absolutely reprobated* to endless perdition before he had done any good or evil.

## DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY.

Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. — Rom. ix. 18.

## CALVINISTIC EXPLANATION.

God is an almighty sovereign; he made all men and all things for his own glory; he is under obligation to no being, and is accountable to none. From among the numerous beings he has made, he has a perfect right to choose whom he pleases as the objects of his complacency, and have mercy on them, and bring them to the enjoyment of everlasting salvation. And he has an equal right to reject all the rest of his creatures, and make them the objects of his displeasure and wrath, for the praise of his justice. And, in order that they may be justly condemned and punished, he has a perfect right to so harden their hearts that they will take pleasure in unrighteousness, and so deserve eternal damnation. Therefore, “whom he will he hardeneth.”

## ARMINIAN EXPLANATION.

This passage, taken in the connection in which it stands, shows us that God, in bestowing his favors on nations, is not regulated by the deserts of those nations, but bestows them on whom, when, and where, he pleaseth. He is directed solely by his own infinite wisdom. By God's hardening them, we are to understand his allowing them an opportunity of abusing his mercy, and thus becoming hardened in sin. Sometimes God is said to do a thing, when he only gives men an opportunity of doing it. “Active verbs,” says Dr. McKnight, “are often used to express, not the doing, but the giving an occasion of doing a thing.” See Gen. xlii. 38; 1 Kings, xiv. 16; Acts i. 18, compared with Matt. xxvii. 7. In

this way, God hardened Pharaoh and the Egyptians; and in this way the Jews also became hardened. "When Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart." Exod. viii. 15. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Eccles. viii. 11.

If his "having *mercy on whom he will*, and hardening whom he will," be applied to men in regard to the salvation of their souls, there is no difficulty in determining who will be the subjects of his *mercy*, nor in ascertaining whom he will *harden*, if we take the Scriptures for our guide. If we turn to Prov. xxviii. 13, we shall find that "*whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy.*" And again, in Luke i. 50, that "*his mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation.*" And we read in 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11, 12, of some who *received not* the love of the truth that they might be saved, and for *this cause* God sends them strong delusions. Their rejection of the truth is the cause of their darkness, and hardness, and final ruin. Here we see that a *penitent sinner* has the promise of obtaining *mercy*, and the impenitent are threatened with *hardness* and ruin.

But how does God *harden* men? Answer: Not by any positive influence on their hearts, but by withholding his Spirit, and withdrawing the light. The absence of light is darkness; he that removes the candle that illuminates my room, may be said to *blind my eyes*, although he does not actually touch them. Thus it is with impenitent sinners; when they have long abused God's mercy, and grieved his Holy Spirit, he sometimes withdraws his Spirit, and they are left in darkness; their heart becomes hard, they follow their own delusions, and

perish. In this way he *will harden* and destroy all who are finally impenitent.

## ON WILLING AND RUNNING.

It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. — Rom. ix. 16.

## CALVINISTIC EXPLANATION.

God having from all eternity absolutely and unchangeably fixed the destiny of all mankind, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting death; therefore, our conversion or salvation does not in any sense depend on our *will* or our *conduct*, but on divine sovereignty. If we are of the number of the elect who were from all eternity predestinated to salvation, God will show us mercy. But if we are of that number whom God from all eternity passed by and ordained to dishonor and wrath, although we might wish and pray, and will and run, God will show us no mercy; for our doom was fixed eternally and irrevocably. We must be punished eternally for our sins, — sins which God eternally decreed we should commit, for he eternally decreed whatever comes to pass.

## ARMINIAN EXPLANATION.

This passage is to be taken in connection with the history of Jacob and Esau, and their respective posterity. Abraham *willed* the *covenant blessings* to Ishmael and his posterity, saying, “O that Ishmael might live before thee!” but God said, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” So likewise, Isaac *willed* that Esau his first-born should inherit the blessing of *national peculiarity*; and Esau *ran* to procure venison, that he might prepare savory meat for his father, that he might thereby be strengthened to *pronounce* the blessing on him. But God, according to

the *purpose* of election, disappointed both, by giving the blessing to Jacob. So, then, in this case, it was not of him that *willed* the blessing to Esau, nor of him who *ran* for the venison, but of God who showed mercy to Jacob and his posterity, by adopting them as his covenant people.

These words are designed to show the Jews that they had no reason to *complain* of God's intention to call the Gentiles to a covenant relation to him in the enjoyment of gospel blessings, any more than Esau had reason to complain of the election of Jacob and his posterity to be his people. So neither had the Gentiles reason to *boast* of being called to the blessings of the gospel, any more than Jacob and his posterity had in their election. In both instances, God had acted as a gracious sovereign, bestowing his favors on whom he pleased, without any reference to their merits. It is God that sheweth mercy.

If any are disposed to insist that our *eternal salvation* is regulated by the same *sovereignty* of God; if they mean that *willing* and *running* do not save us, but that we are saved by the *grace* and *mercy* of God, they certainly speak the truth; for we are *saved by grace*, by the merits of Christ, and not by works. Neither *willing*, nor *running*, nor anything else that we can do, can save us. But if they mean that God, in bestowing pardon and heaven, acts as a sovereign, giving salvation to whom he pleaseth, whether they obey his commands or disobey them, they are certainly in great error; and to make such an application of this text is grossly to pervert the word of God. Although our salvation is not of him that *willeth*, nor of him that *runneth*, but of God, yet, without both *willing* and *running*, God will give no man salvation.

## ON JOHN XV. 16.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go forth and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain.

## A CALVINISTIC EXPLANATION.

No sinner ever chooses Christ, but Christ from all eternity has chosen some sinners to salvation. The disciples, to whom these words were addressed, were among the elect sinners whom Christ from all eternity ordained to be saved. And he had also ordained that in time they should bring forth the fruits of election, that is, faith, repentance and holiness, and that these fruits should remain, that they should never fall away from grace so as to perish.

According to this explanation, this passage teaches eternal election, effectual calling, and final perseverance of the saints, or the impossibility of falling from grace.

## AN ARMINIAN EXPLANATION.

This was addressed to the apostles whom Christ had chosen to the work of the ministry; and to this work he had "ordained" them, that is, *set them apart*, authorized them, that they should go and preach, and that their preaching, being attended by the blessing of God, *should bring forth fruit*, that is, that through their instrumentality sinners should be converted, as the fruit of their labors; and that this fruit of their ministry should *remain*, that is, by their ministry the church should be built up, and remain after they had finished their course and gone to their reward; remain as a monument of the truth of Christianity and the power of divine grace; remain as the salt of the earth and the light of the world; remain to be the great instrumentality in carrying forward the designs of God in saving mankind.

## ELECTION TO SALVATION.

God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. — 2 Thess. ii. 13.

None can be saved in heaven unless they are previously elected to this salvation by divine grace. But when does this election take place? before we were born, or after? is it in time, or was it in eternity? The text above cited tells us, in relation to the Christians at Thessalonica, that they were chosen of God "from the beginning." From the *beginning* of what? Was it from the beginning of eternity, or of time, of their existence on earth, or was it from the beginning of something else? To these inquiries I would offer the following answers:

1. It could not have been from the *beginning of eternity* that they were chosen or elected to salvation, for the very good reason that eternity had no beginning. To talk of the beginning of that which could not possibly have any beginning, is absolutely absurd.

2. Nor could these Thessalonian Christians have been chosen to salvation from the *beginning of time*, for it is said they "were chosen through sanctification of the Spirit;" but they had no existence when time first began, and the Spirit could not sanctify them before they commenced their existence.

3. Nor yet was it from the commencement, or *beginning, of their existence*, that they were chosen to salvation, for it is expressly declared that they were chosen to salvation not only through sanctification of the Spirit, but through "*the belief of the truth*." When they first *began their existence*, they were wholly incapable of believing the truth. Children must exist some time before they can believe any truth, especially the truth of

the gospel; they must become in some measure capable of understanding it, before they can believe it savingly.

4. If, then, these Thessalonians were not elected or chosen to salvation from the beginning neither of eternity nor of time, nor from the beginning of their existence, when were they chosen? from the beginning of what? I answer, they were chosen to salvation *from the beginning of the apostle's labors at Thessalonica.*

There are several places where the term "from the beginning" is used in reference to a particular period of time, and has no reference to eternity or unbeginning time. Let the reader examine a concordance.

Whoever will carefully examine the account given in the 17th chapter of the Acts, verses 1 to 4, where the historian gives an account of the visit of Paul and Silas at Thessalonica, and their success, and compare it with the account St. Paul gives of it, will readily understand what this *from the beginning* means. He tells us that Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews; and that Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom he preached is Christ. And he tells us what was the immediate effect his preaching produced: he says some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

And the account which St. Paul gives of these Christians at Thessalonica, in his first epistle to them, is as follows: In the fourth verse he says, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." Then he goes on to show how it took place, by saying, "Our gospel came

not unto you in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; and ye became followers of us, and of the Lord; having received the word, ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God; our entrance in unto you was not in vain; ye became followers of the churches of God." This shows us *when* and *how* they were chosen to salvation. We see—

1. That St. Paul went to Thessalonica while the people were generally given to idolatry, and that he preached the gospel to them.

2. That the Holy Spirit accompanied the word preached with power, enlightening their minds, and arousing their consciences, and thus giving them "much assurance" of the truth of the gospel.

3. That many of the people, at the "beginning" of their labors at Thessalonica, believed the gospel preached unto them; they became convinced of its truth, and accordingly they turned from their idols to serve the living and true God. And thus, *at that time*, and in *this manner*, they were chosen or elected "to salvation, through *sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*."

This account of the election of the Christians at Thessalonica illustrates the doctrine of election to salvation as it is generally taught in the Holy Scriptures. It is a *conditional election*; hence it is that we are exhorted to make our calling and election sure. God's love is the *original* cause of our salvation; the atonement of Christ is the *meritorious* cause; the influence of the Spirit is the *effective* cause; the preaching of the gospel is the instrumental cause, and believing the truth, and a corresponding course of action, is the *conditional* cause. If God had not loved the world, he would not have given his

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Son to die for the world ; if Christ had not died for the world, no man could have been saved, for the gospel could never have been preached ; and if the Holy Spirit did not attend the word, men could neither understand nor believe it, such is human depravity. But although all these causes exist, so far as God and truth are concerned, men may continue to resist the Spirit and reject the truth, they may refuse to turn from their idols to serve the living God ; and, if they will not repent and believe, they will not be chosen to salvation, but will perish. Neither the *love* of God, the *atonement* of Christ, the *influence of the Holy Spirit*, nor the preaching of the gospel, will secure their election to salvation ; they cannot, because we are chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and *belief of the truth*. Faith on our part is the condition of being chosen to salvation, and is as necessary as divine influence, or the atoning sacrifice, or the love of God. We are saved by grace, *through* faith.

**CALLED ACCORDING TO GOD'S PURPOSE.**

All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. — Rom. viii. 28.

I. To whom shall all things work together for good ? The apostle says, “ To them who are the called according to his purpose,” and “ who love God.” How does God call men ? He calls us by his providence, word, and Holy Spirit. But what is his “ purpose,” or design in calling men ? His purpose in calling us is always *gracious*. It is that we may hear his voice, see our danger, turn to him, and seek salvation. Who are “ the called according to his purpose ? ” All such as comply with his purpose in calling them ; that is, all who listen

to his call, and see their danger, turn from their sins by repentance, and seek for pardon by believing in Christ. These comply with God's purpose, and may be said to be "called according to his purpose." When men thus turn at his call, and come to him through Christ for salvation, he will pardon all their sins that are past, and renew their hearts in righteousness and true holiness; and when this work is wrought by the Holy Spirit, they are enabled to "love God," and to serve him acceptably. Then they inherit the promise that, "all things shall work together for good."

II. But what are the "all things" that shall work together for good to them that love God?

From this text some have undertaken to justify sin; that there is no harm in living in sin; that is, that sin will not endanger our salvation; for "all things," sin not excepted, will "work together for our good." Upon this I will offer two remarks:

1. That the expression, "all things," frequently occurs in the Scriptures, where it must be understood in a limited sense, as not including *everything*. In 1 Cor. iii. 21, the apostle says, "All things are yours." He certainly could not mean that his neighbor's things were his. Again, in Phil. ii. 14, he says, "Do all things without murmuring." "All things," in this place, cannot mean everything, for then it would embrace sin, such as profane swearing, drunkenness, theft, &c., and would make the apostle to be exhorting his brethren to the commission of such deeds. Again, in Eph. i. 11, we are told that "God worketh *all things* after the counsel of his own will." Now, if "all things" means everything, sin not excepted, then God must be the worker of sin; and what would he be in this case, but a sinner? And, moreover,

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sin would be according to his will, if sin be included in the expression, all things.

2. From the foregoing remarks, it appears very evident, that the expression "all things," as used in the text I am considering, cannot include "everything," sin not excepted; but is to be limited to certain things, to which a particular allusion is made. When the apostle tells Christians that "all things" are theirs, it must mean all things that are promised, or all things that are necessary or best for them. When he says, "do all things," he does not mean that we should commit sin, swear, and steal, &c, but do all things that are required in the gospel; all things that are commanded. So, when he says that "God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," we are to understand that whatever God worketh, he does it according to the counsel of his own will; that is, the ways of his providence and grace are according to his infinite wisdom and holy will.

So, in the text under consideration, the expression, "all things," refers to all things of a certain class, to which allusion is here made. The things in this class are given us somewhat in detail in the same chapter, from the 35th verse to the end of the chapter. They are things that pertain to the sufferings of Christians in this life. "In all these things," says the apostle, "we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."

III. But how, or in what way, shall the various sufferings in this life, to which Christians are exposed; work together for their good?

1. **Afflictions** are sometimes to be regarded as the chastenings of the Lord, designed to reprove us for our past neglect, and in this respect thus work for our good.

2. They prepare us to sympathize with our suffering

fellow-creatures, and this is working for our good, for sympathy sometimes makes us far more useful to society.

3. Afflictions may excite us to gratitude to God, for what we do enjoy. We seldom realize the value of blessings until we are deprived of them.

4. They wean us from the world, by showing us how unsatisfactory and how uncertain all our worldly comforts are. The more we see the vanity of the world, the more we long for heaven.

5. Afflictions may be a source of great comfort to a Christian, by establishing his faith in God's providence, promises, and grace. After Abraham had been called to so great a trial as that of offering up Isaac, and had found grace sufficient to support him, and God's providence able to deliver him, whatever trial he might afterward be called to suffer, he would not hesitate to trust in God. When Job was so terribly afflicted, he found to be true what the apostle afterwards declared, that tribulation worketh patience, and patience worketh experience, and experience hope. He was confirmed in the truth of God's promise, and could trust him even without a special promise. The experience of every suffering Christian teaches this. Afflictions work together for good to them that love God. O, how suffering Christians are honored! We have good evidence that God has not forgotten us, while he is chastening, for "whom he loveth he chasteneth."

## ON MATTHEW XXI. 9.

Hosanna to the son of David. Hosanna in the highest.

The word Hosanna, in Hebrew, signifies, *Save, we beseech*. It is a kind of acclamation, similar to *God save the king*. It was used among the ancient Hebrews as a sort of prayer, offered for a person whom they desired greatly to extol, on account of his superior excellences, and for whom they felt a very special regard. The word, as applied to Jesus on this occasion, was of the same import as if they had said, “God save King Messiah.” It being repeated in the same sentence, and the expression, *in the highest*, being added to it, is very expressive of the ardor of their feelings, and also of their elevated views of his dignity, as though they esteemed him as the *chief*, or *highest*, among and over all the sons of men. God save King Messiah, who is above all others, as in him dwelleth all excellency, and all fulness.

These exclamations were, in some measure, involuntary; the people being suddenly moved upon by a divine influence, they were made to give glory to Christ. This was designed to be a kind of offset to the degradation which was so soon to follow, when his enemies would exclaim, “Away with him; crucify him, crucify him!” God had testified that he was his well-beloved Son; angels, both from heaven and from hell, had confessed him as their superior, and now human beings, both old and young, are made to cry, “Hosanna, — hosanna in the highest!” This was designed as a foreshadowing of the glory which should follow, when the Son of man should be glorified; when the gates and the everlasting doors should be lifted up, and the King of Glory should come in; when he should

appear in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels, and should show to the whole universe that this Jesus is the King of Glory, and the whole universe should exclaim, "He is Lord of all!"

## BOISTEROUS PREACHING.

Empty wagons often make more noise than loaded ones, and shallow waters sometimes make more foam than deep waters. Some preachers can more easily preach a very boisterous sermon than a great sermon, and some hearers are more fond of sound than of sense, — with what is made for show, than with what is made for use. With many persons it is considered a powerful sermon, if there be a powerful noise, and powerful gesticulations. It is much easier for such to hear, than it is to think. After hearing one of these boisterous discourses, made up of words and sounds, which made the house ring and the head ache, it is said that a hearer once had the following *reverie* : —

"He imagined that he was very thirsty, and took a pitcher to procure a cooling draught. He had not gone far when his attention was called by the roaring of a neighboring cataract. He looked, and saw there was a great abundance of waters, which came tumbling down from a mighty precipice. He approached it and placed the pitcher amid the rushing torrent, as it fell from its giddy height. The shock of its fall caused his body to shake and his hand to tremble, and well-nigh carried his pitcher entirely away. He succeeded, however, to hold on until he thought it was full; he then withdrew it and lifted it to his parched lips; but what was his disappointment to find that it contained scarcely a single drop! It had fallen in with such violence, that nearly the whole

had been forced out again ; what remained was froth and foam.

“ Finding he could not catch the rapid stream, as it fell from this mighty cataract, he went a little further down, where the water had fallen, and was in great commotion by reason of its descending force. He dipped his pitcher beneath the whirling and agitated pool, and filled it entirely full. But when he put it to his lips, he was doomed to disappointment again, it was so turbid in consequence of its rapid motion. He had much mire and filth, and but little water. He thought he began to grow fainter and fainter; and, espying a little shady path leading far down the winding stream, he followed it until he arrived at a quiet pool, clear and deep. He put his pitcher in once more, and behold, to his great joy, he drew it forth full from the crystal fountain ! So he drank and drank, until his thirst was perfectly satisfied, and he went on his way rejoicing.”

It is well there are diverse gifts in the Christian ministry, for there are diverse tastes to be accommodated among the people. There is, perhaps, no body of ministers to be found, where this diversity of gifts is more manifest than among the Methodists. This is owing, in a great measure, to the fact, that among them there is more of nature than of art. The simplicity of nature is true eloquence. Truth should not be hidden in words which have no meaning.





